

THE
DRAMATICK WORKS
OF
BEAUMONT and FLETCHER.

V O L. I.







M. A. Roether del.

Agulor sculp.

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T H E
D R A M A T I C K W O R K S
O F
BEAUMONT and FLETCHER;

Al
Collated with all the Former Editions,

A N D C O R R E C T E D ;

With Notes, Critical and Explanatory,

B Y V A R I O U S C O M M E N T A T O R S ;

And Adorned with Fifty-four Original Engravings.

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S C O R N F U L L A D Y .

L O N D O N ,

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M D C C L X X V I I I .



P R E F A C E.

CONSIDERING the acknowledged excellence of our Authors, loudly acknowledged by the most eminent of their contemporaries and successors, it appears at first sight rather wonderful, that in the space of a hundred and fifty years, which have elapsed since the death of these Poets, no more than three complete editions of their Works have been published; we say *three*, because the first folio professedly included no more of their Plays, than those which had not before been *singly* printed in quarto.

To what causes are we to attribute this amazing disparity between the reputation of the Writers, and the publick demand for their productions? Are libraries furnished with books, as apartments with furniture, according to the fashion? or is it necessary, because plays were originally written to be acted, that they must continue to be perpetually represented, or cease to be read?

Truth, we fear, obliges us to confess that these questions must, without much qualification, be answered in the affirmative. Shakespeare, admirable as he is, certainly owes some part of his present popularity, and the extraordinary preference given to his plays beyond those of all our other dramatists, to the mode adopted by the literary world to extol him. By the changes of fashion, Nature and right reason sometimes come into vogue; but the multitude take them, like coin, because they are in currency, while men of sense and letters alone appreciate them according to their intrinsic value, and receive merit, wherever they find it, as bullion, though it has not the stamp of fashion impressed on it. To such men, the genius of Shakespeare, instead of obscuring, illustrates the kindred talents of Beaumont and Fletcher: Yet such men are but rare; and one of the most acute and learned editors of Shakespeare speaking of his own notes “ concerned in a critical explanation of the “ author’s beauties and defects; but chiefly of his “ *beauties*, whether in stile, thought, sentiment, “ character, or composition,” adds, that “ the “ public judgment hath less need to be assisted “ in what it shall *reject*, than in what it ought to “ PRIZE: Nor is the value they set upon a work, “ a certain proof that they understand it. *For* “ *it is ever seen, THAT HALF A DOZEN VOICES* “ OF CREDIT GIVE THE LEAD, *and if the pub-* “ *lick chance to be in good humour, or the author* “ *much*

*"much in their favour, THE PEOPLE ARE SURE
"TO FOLLOW."*

To the popularity of a dramatick writer, nothing more immediately contributes than the frequency of theatrical representation. Common readers, like barren spectators, know little more of an author than what the actor, not always his happiest commentator, presents to them. Mutations of Shakespeare have been recited, and even quoted, as his genuine text; and many of his dramas, not in the course of exhibition, are by the multitude not honoured with a perusal. On the stage, indeed, our Authors formerly took the lead, Dryden having informed us, that in his day two of their plays were performed to one of Shakespeare. The stage, however, owes its attraction to the actor as well as author; and if the able performer will not contribute to give a polish and brilliancy to the work, it will lie, like the rough diamond, obscured and disregarded. The artists of former days worked the rich mine of Beaumont and Fletcher; and Betterton, the Roscius of his age, enriched his catalogue of characters from their dramas, as well as those of Shakespeare. Unfortunately for our Authors, the Roscius of our day confined his round of characters in old plays, too closely to Shakespeare. We may almost say of him indeed, in this respect, as Dryden says of Shakespeare's scenes of magick,

Within that circle none durst walk but he ;

but surely we must lament, that those extraordinary powers, which have so successfully been exerted in the illustration of Shakespeare, and sometimes prostituted to the support of the meanest writers, should not more frequently have been employed to throw a light upon Beaumont and Fletcher. Their Plays, we will be bold to say, have the same excellencies, as well as the same defects, each perhaps in an inferior degree, with the dramas of their great master. Like his, they are built on histories or novels, pursuing in the same manner the story through its various circumstances ; like his, but not always with equal truth and nature, their characters are boldly drawn and warmly coloured ; like his, their dialogue, containing every beauty of stile, and licentiousness of construction, is thick sown with moral sentiments, interchanged with ludicrous and serious, ribaldry and sublime, and sometimes enlivened with *wit* in a richer vein than even the immortal dramas of Shakespeare. In Comedy, the criticks of their own days, and those immediately succeeding, gave Beaumont and Fletcher the preference to Shakespeare ; and although the slow award of time has at length justly decreed the superior excellence of the glorious father of our drama beyond all further appeal, yet these his illustrious followers ought not surely to be cast so far behind him, as to fall
into

into contemptuous neglect, while the most careless works of Shakespeare are studiously brought forward. The Maid's Tragedy, King and No King, Love's Pilgrimage, Monsieur Thomas, &c. &c. &c. would hardly disgrace that stage which has exhibited The Two Gentlemen of Verona.

Mr. Seward has employed great part of his Preface in citing similar passages from Shakespeare and our Authors; and though we do not entirely agree with him in the comparisons he has drawn, we cannot resist the temptation of adducing one instance, in our opinion, more to the advantage of our Authors than any mentioned in that Preface. It is the entire character of the boy HENGO, in the Tragedy of Bonduca; a character which is, we think (taken altogether) better sustained, and more beautifully natural and pathetick, than the Prince Arthur of Shakespeare. The scene in King John between Arthur and Hubert, excellent as it is, almost passes the bounds of pity and terror, and becomes horrible; besides which, Shakespeare, to whom "a quibble," as Dr. Johnson says, "was the fatal Cleopatra for which he lost the world, and was content to lose it," has enervated the dialogue with many frigid conceits, which he has, with more than usual impropriety, put into the mouth of the innocent Arthur, while he is pleading most affectingly for mercy.

As for example :

——Will you put out mine eyes?

These eyes, that never did, nor never shall,
So much as frown on you?

Hub. I've sworn to do it;
And with hot irons must I burn them out.

Arth. *Ah, none but in this iron age would do it!*
The iron of itself, tho' heat red hot,
Approaching near these eyes, would drink my tears,
And quench its fiery indignation,
Even in the matter of mine innocence:
Nay, after that, consume away in rust,
But for containing fire to harm mine eye.
Are you more stubborn-hard than hammer'd iron?
Oh, if an angel should have come to me,
And told me, Hubert should put out mine eyes,
I would not have believ'd him; no tongue, but Hubert's.

And again :

——Go to! hold your tongue!

Arth. *Hubert, the utterance of a brace of tongues*
Must needs want pleading for a pair of eyes:
Let me not hold my tongue; let me not, Hubert!
Or, Hubert, if you will, cut out my tongue,
So I may keep mine eyes. Oh, spare mine eyes;
Tho' to no use, but still to look on you!
Lo, by my troth, the instrument is cold,
And would not harm me.

Hub. I can heat it, boy.

Arth. No, in good sooth; *the fire is dead with grief,*
Being create for comfort, to be us'd
In undeserv'd extremes: see else yourself;
There is no malice in this burning coal;
The breath of Heaven hath blown its spirit out,
And strew'd repentant ashes on its head.

Hub. But with my breath I can revive it, boy.

Arth.

Arth. *And if you do, you will but make it blush,
 And glow with shame of your proceedings, Hubert :
 Nay, it, perchance, will sparkle in your eyes ;
 And, like a dog, that is compell'd to fight,
 Snatch at his master that doth tarre him on.
 All things, that you should use to do me wrong,
 Deny their office : only you do lack
 That mercy, which fierce fire and iron extend,
 Creatures of note for mercy-lacking uses.*

The Reader, we imagine, will concur in our disapprobation of the passages printed in Italicks. Between Caratach and Hengo we do not remember that a line occurs, affected or unnatural ; and nothing can be more exquisitely tender than the several scenes between them. The whole play abounds with dramattick and poetick excellence.

Allowing, however, freely allowing, the general superiority of Shakespeare to Beaumont and Fletcher (and indeed to all other poets, Homer perhaps only excepted) yet we cannot so far degrade our Authors, as to reduce the most excellent of their pieces to a level with the meanest effusions of Shakespeare ; nor can we believe that there are not many of their long-neglected dramas that might not, with very inconsiderable variations, be accommodated to the taste of a modern audience. The publick have been long habituated to the phraseology of Shakespeare, whose language, in the opinion of Dryden, is a little obsolete in comparison of that of our Au-

thors; and irregularities of fable have been not only pardoned, but defended. When the great English actor, of whom we have been speaking, first undertook the direction of the stage, his friend (the present Laureat) boldly told him,

A nation's taste depends on you.

The national taste, under his happy influence, acquired from day to day, from year to year, an increased relish for Shakespeare; and it is almost matter of amazement, as well as concern, that so little of his attention was directed to those dramatick writers, whose poetical character bore so great an affinity to the just object of his admiration. A deceased actor, of great merit, and still greater promise, very successfully opened his theatrical career by appearing in the tragedy of Philaster. At the same time, the same tragedy contributed not a little to the growing fame of one of our principal actresses. That play, the Two Noble Kinsmen, and some other pieces of Beaumont and Fletcher, besides those we have already enumerated, would undoubtedly become favourite entertainments of the stage, if the theatrical talents of the performers bore any kind of proportion to the dramatick abilities of the writers. Since ~~the~~ directors of our theatres in some sort hold the keys of the temple of dramatick fame, let them do honour to themselves by
throwing

throwing open their doors to Beaumont and Fletcher! Seeing there are at present but small hopes of emulating the transcendent actor, who so long and so effectually impressed on our minds the excellence of Shakespeare, let them at least rescue their performers from an immediate comparison, so much to their disadvantage, by trying their force on the characters of our Authors! The Two Noble Kinsmen indeed has been ascribed (falsely, as we think) to Shakespeare. "The Two Noble Kinsmen, (says Pope) if that play be his, *as there goes a tradition* it was, and indeed it *has little resemblance of Fletcher*, and more of our author, than some of those which have been received as genuine." Unhappy Poets! whose very excellence is turned against them. Shakespeare's claim to any share in the Two Noble Kinsmen we have considered at the end of that piece, to which we refer the Reader. In this place we shall only enter our protest against the authority of Pope, who appears to have felt himself mortified and ashamed, when he "discharged the dull duty of an Editor." He surely must be allowed to discharge his duty with reluctance, and most probably with neglect, who speaks of it in such terms. In his Preface indeed he has, with a most masterly hand, drawn the outline of the poetical character of Shakespeare; but in that very Preface, by a strange perversion of taste, he proposes to throw out of the list of Shakespeare's plays *The Winter's*

Winter's Tale, which he considers as spurious! On no better foundation, we think, has he asserted, that the play of the Two Noble Kinsmen *has little resemblance of Fletcher*. "There goes a tradition," that *Garth did not write his own Dispensary*; "there goes a tradition," that the admirable translator of Homer, like Shakespeare himself, had *little Latin, and less Greek*; but what candid critick would countenance such a tradition? And is such a vague, blind, playhouse tradition a sufficient warrant for one great poet to tear the laurel from the brows of another?

The modern editors of Shakespeare contemplate with admiration that indifference to future fame, which suffered him to behold with uncommon apathy some of his pieces incorrectly printed during his life, without attempting to rescue them from the hands of barbarous editors, or preparing for posterity a genuine collection of his Works, supervised and corrected by himself. In our opinion, the Dedication and Preface of Heminge and Condell more than insinuate the intention of Shakespeare, had he survived, to have published such a collection *. But, be that as it

* "We hope, that they outliving him, and he not having the fate common with some, to be exequutor to his own writings, &c."

[Dedication of Shakespeare's Works by Heminge and Condell.

"It had been a thing, we confesse, worthy to have been wished, that the Author himself had lived to have set forth, and overseene his own writings; but since it has been ordained otherwise,
" and

may, his supposed carelessness concerning the fate of his pieces after they had been represented, is not so very singular; many of the plays of Beaumont and Fletcher also having been inaccurately printed from stolen copies during the lives of the Authors, and the remainder collected some years after their deaths, like the Works of Shakespeare, by the players. Ben Jonson appears to have been the only dramattick poet of that age, who paid any attention to the publication of his Works.

The old quarto copies of Beaumont and Fletcher have come down to us exactly in the same state with the old quartos of Shakespeare. The printers of those times not only copied, but multiplied the errors of the transcriber. An Editor, nay even a corrector of the press, seems to have been a character of which they had not the smallest conception. Even the title-pages appear to exhibit the very names of the Authors at random, sometimes announcing the play as the work of one Poet, sometimes of another, and sometimes as the joint production of both. A Bookseller is somewhere introduced as reprehending *the saving ways of an Ode-writer*, who, he supposed, merely to lengthen his work, would often put no more than three or four

“and he by death departed from that right, we pray you doe not
 “envy his friends, the office of their care and paine, to have
 “collected and published them.”

[Preface of Heminge and Condell.
 words

words into a line. The old printers seem to have conceived the same idea of the parsimony of Poets, and therefore often without scruple run verse into prose, not adverting to measure or harmony, but solely governed by the dimensions of the page, whether divided into columns, or carried all across from one scanty margin to another. Their orthography* is so generally vicious and

² *Their orthography, &c.*] To this article our ancestors seem to have afforded very little attention: *Ingenious* for *ingenuous*, *alter* for *altar*, *cozen* for *cousin*, *desert* for *desart*, *talents* for *talons*, *then* for *than*, &c. &c. continually occur in the old books. Nor does there seem to have been any greater regard paid to proper names; one of our Poets, for instance, we find called *Fleatcher*, *Flecher*, and *Fletcher*; and the other, *Beamont*, *Beamount*, and *Beaumont*. The name of *Shakespeare* is spelt at least a dozen ways. We are told, in the first note on the Dunciad of “an *autograph* of “*Shakspeare* himself, whereby it appeared that he spelt his own “name without the first *e*.” Yet even this *autograph* is not decisive. In the Register-book at Stratford upon Avon, the name of the family is regularly entered *Shakspere*. In the Poet’s own will, which now lies in the Prerogative-Office, Doctor’s Commons, his name is spelt THREE different ways. In the body of the will it is always written *Shackspeare*: This, however, may be ascribed to the Lawyer. The will consists of three sheets, the first of which is legibly subscribed *Shackspere*; the two others *Shakspeare*. It must be acknowledged that the hand-writing, as well as situation of the first signature, is different from that of the two following; but it appears extraordinary that a stranger should attempt to falsify a signature, which is usually subscribed to each sheet for the sake of giving authenticity to so solemn an instrument, and is, therefore, always taken to be the hand-writing of the testator. Mr. Garrick, however, has now in his possession the lease of a house formerly situated in Black-Friars, and but lately taken down on account of the new bridge, which belonged to that Poet: As a party to that lease he signs his name *Shakspeare*; and the first syllable of his name is now pronounced in his native county, Warwickshire, with the short *a*, *Shäk*- and not *Shäke speare*. On the other hand, it must be confessed, that the dialect of that county is
more

unsettled, and their punctuation so totally defective, that the regulation of either rarely merits the triumphs that have so often been derived from it. On the whole, however, these old copies of our Poets may by an intelligent Reader be perused with satisfaction. The typographical errors are indeed gross and numerous; but their very number and grossness keeps the reader awake to the genuine text, and commonly renders such palpable inaccuracies not prejudicial. The genuine work of the Author is there extant, though the lines are often, like a confused multitude, huddled on one another, and not marshalled and arrayed by the discipline of a modern Editor.

The First Folio, containing thirty-four of our Authors' pieces, never till then collected or printed, was published by the Players, obviously transcribed from the prompter's books, commonly the most inaccurate and barbarous of all manuscripts, or made out piecemeal from the detached parts copied for the use of the performers. Hence it happens, that the stage-direction has sometimes crept into the text, and the name of the actor is now and then substituted for that of the character. The

more provincial than classical, and we believe that all the families, who are now known by the Poet's name, both spell and pronounce it *Shakespeare*; which indeed seems most reconcilable to etymology, if etymology be at all concerned in so capricious a circumstance. Every thing, however trivial, interests an English reader, from the relation it bears to that Great Poet; which is the only excuse we have to offer for so long a note on a point of so little importance.

transcribers,

transcribers, knowing perhaps no language perfectly, corrupted all languages; and vitiated the dialogue with false Latin, false French, false Italian, and false Spanish; nay, as Pope says of the old copies of Shakespear, "their very Welch is false."

The Players, however, notwithstanding the censure of Pope, "yet from *Cibber* fore," seem to have been, at least with regard to our Poets, as faithful and able editors as others of that period. It is most natural to suppose that the playhouse manuscript contained the real work of the Author, though perhaps ignorantly copied, and accommodated to the use of the theatre. A writer in his closet often silently acquiesces in the excellence of a continued declamation; but if at any time the audience, like Polonius, cry out, "This is too long," such passages are afterwards naturally curtailed or omitted in the representation; but the curious Reader, "being less *fastidious* than the *proud* spectator" (for in such terms Horace speaks of the spectator) is pleased with the restoration of those passages in print. "Players, says Pope, "are just such judges of what is *right*, "as tailors are of what is *graceful*." The comparison is more ludicrous and sarcastick than it is just. The Poet himself, who makes the cloaths, may rather be called the tailor; actors are at most but the empty beaux that wear them, and the spectators censure or admire them. A tailor, however, if
players

players must be the tailors, though not equal in science to a statuary or an anatomist, must yet be conceived to have a more intimate knowledge of the human form than a blacksmith or a carpenter; and if many of the actors know but little of the drama, they would probably have known still less of it, had they not been retainers to the stage. Some improvements, as well as corruptions of the drama, may undoubtedly be derived from the theatre. Cibber, *idle Cibber*, wrote for the stage with more success than Pope. Æschylus, Sophocles, Plautus, and Terence, were soldiers and freedmen; Shakespeare and Moliere were actors.

The Second Folio contained the first complete collection of the Works of Beaumont and Fletcher. Concerning that edition we have nothing to add to what has been said by other Editors, whose Prefaces we have annexed to our own.

The Octavo Editors of 1711 seemed to aim at little more than reprinting our Authors' Plays, and giving a collection of them more portable and convenient than the Folios. Their text, however, is more corrupt than that of either the quartos or folios, the errors of which they religiously preserved, adding many vicious readings of their own, some of which have been combated in very long notes by their successors.

In

In the year 1742, Theobald, on the success and reputation of his Shakespeare, projected an edition of the Works of Ben Jonson. What he had executed of it, fell into the hands of Mr. Whalley, and is inserted in that learned and ingenious gentleman's edition. At the same time he exhibited proposals for a publication of the Plays of Beaumont and Fletcher; in which he was afterwards assisted by Mr. Seward and Mr. Symphon: but Theobald dying before he had committed more than the first and about half the second volume to the press, the undertaking was continued by the two last-mentioned gentlemen; and the edition thus jointly, or rather severally, executed by Theobald, Mr. Seward, and Mr. Symphon, at length appeared in the year 1750. These gentlemen were the first Editors of our Poets who professed to collate the old copies, to reform the punctuation, and to amend the corruptions of the text. Some attempts also were made to elucidate the obscurities, and enforce the excellencies of their Authors. How far we disagree or coincide with them will appear on inspection of the particular passages to which their several observations refer. At present it will be sufficient to declare, that we should have been inclined to entertain a more respectful opinion of their labours, if they had not very early betrayed that confidence which every Reader is tempted to repose in an Editor, not only by their carelessness, but by the more unpardonable faults of
faithlessness

faithlessness and misrepresentation. Their reports of the state of the old copies can never safely be taken on trust, and on examination many of those copies will appear to be both negligently collated, and untruly quoted. Their punctuation also, notwithstanding their occasional self-approbation, is almost as inaccurate as that of the most antient and rude editions; and their critical remarks have, in our opinion, oftener been well intended, than conceived. Their work, however, has in the main conduced to the illustration of our Authors, and we have seized every fair occasion to applaud the display of their diligence, as well as the efforts of their critical acuteness and sagacity. Such of their notes as appeared incontestible, or even plausible, we have adopted without remark; to those more dubious we have subjoined additional annotations; those of less consequence we have abridged; and those of no importance we have omitted.

In the present Edition, it has been our chief aim to give the old text as it lies in the old books, with no other variations, but such as the Writers themselves, had they superintended an impression of their Works, or even a corrector of the press, would have made. Yet even these variations, if at all important, have not been made in silence. Notes, however, have been subjoined to the text as briefly and as sparingly as possible;

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but the lapse of time, and fluctuation of language, have rendered some Notes necessary for the purpose of explaining obsolete words, unusual phrases, old customs, and obscure or distant allusions. Critical remarks, and conjectural emendations, have been seldom hazarded, nor has any ridicule been wantonly thrown on former Editors, who have only sometimes been reprehended for pompous affectation, and more frequently for want of care and fidelity. Every material comment on these Plays has been retained in this Edition, though often without the long and ostentatious notes that first introduced those comments to the publick. At the same time, we have religiously attributed every observation, critical or philological, to its due author, not wishing to claim any praise as Editors, but by industriously endeavouring, as an act of duty, to collect from all quarters every thing that might contribute to illustrate the Works of Beaumont and Fletcher.

To conclude, we have beheld with pity and indignation the mean parade of many modern Editors, and we have endeavoured to fulfil their duties without imbibing their arrogance. We are perhaps too proud to indulge so poor a vanity; at least, we are too much occupied to litigate readings we think of small importance, and too honest to claim restorations not our own, or to propose readings as corrections that are no more
than

than restorations. The Stationer has not disgraced our Authors with Tobacco-Paper; the Press, we trust, has done its duty; and the Rolling-Press, at a very considerable expence, has added its assistance. The Cuts, if we are not deceived, are for the most part happily designed, and well executed, and will probably be deemed an agreeable addition to the Work: At least, we may with truth assert, that no authors in the English language, published at the same price, have so many and so valuable Engravings.

The province of a Painter and an Editor are directly opposite. In the first instance the canvas receives its chief value from the artist, and in the second the artist derives almost all his consequence from the canvas. The Editor, if he lives, is carried down the stream of time by his Author; and if the Author be excellent, and his commentary judicious,

Still shall his little bark attendant sail,
Pursue the triumph, and partake the gale,

For our parts, we have been incited to this undertaking from a real admiration of these Poets, grounded, as we apprehend, on their genuine excellencies, and a thorough persuasion that the Works of Beaumont and Fletcher may proudly claim a second place in the English Drama, nearer to the

first than the third, to those of Shakespeare; some of their Plays being so much in his manner, that they can scarcely be distinguished to be the work of another hand.

E X T R A C T.

THE following Passage, extracted from Mr. Capell's Notes on Shakespeare's Antony and Cleopatra, is particularly worthy the attention of the Readers of all the Dramatick Performances produced in that age. Without adverting to the form of the Stage, and the nature of its Decorations at that period, several passages in old Plays are rather obscure, and sometimes scarcely intelligible.—It were to be wished, indeed, that the ingenious and elaborate Commentator had quoted some Authorities; but, from his known fidelity and diligence, there is no doubt but that the information here given may be depended on, as genuine and authentick.

“ BUT this [*the custom of Shakespeare's stage, of having womens' parts acted by boys*] was not the only defect of the stage that these plays were brought out upon; another, and more considerable, was it's fittings out: Scenes were unknown to it; all its decorations were—certain arras or tapestries in front, and some on the sides, with slips between: The platform was double, the hinder or back part of it rising some little matter above that in the front; and this served them for chambers or galleries; for Juliet to hold discourse from with Romeo, and for Cleopatra in this play

“ 10

“ to draw up Antony dying *; and this upper stage
 “ too, it is probable, was the place of performance
 “ for those little engrafted pieces that Shakespeare
 “ has given us, as—the Play in Hamlet, Masque in
 “ the Tempest, &c.—the persons to whom they
 “ were presented, sitting upon the lower. That
 “ this was their stage’s construction, and continued
 “ to be so, (perhaps, as low down as the general
 “ reform of it at the Restoration, the æra of scenes
 “ and of actresses) is evinced beyond doubting, from
 “ entries that are found in some plays of rather a
 “ later date than the Poet’s; in which are seen the
 “ terms—*upper*, and *lower*; and dialogues pass be-
 “ tween persons, standing some on the one and some
 “ on the other stage: And this form it received from
 “ the earliest pieces produced on it,—the Mysteries:
 “ For the exhibition of which, the platform had yet
 “ another division; a part beyond the two we are
 “ speaking of, and rising higher than them; upon
 “ which appeared their *Pater Celestis*, attended by
 “ angels; patriarchs and glorified persons upon that
 “ in the middle, and mere men on the lowermost:
 “ And Hell (a most necessary member of these cu-
 “ rious productions, for without it there had been
 “ no entertainment for some of their auditors) was
 “ represented by a great gaping hole on the side of
 “ that platform, that vomited something like flames;
 “ out of which their greatest jokers, the devils,
 “ ascended at times, and mixed with the men; and
 “ into which, they were commonly driven in heaps
 “ at the drama’s conclusion: But this Hell, and the
 “ higher division, vanished with the Mysteries; and
 “ the stage’s form, after that, was as above. The
 “ poverty of this apparatus had one very consider-

* This Upper Stage must have been also made use of in several
 of the Plays of our Poets; particularly in *Bonduca*, *Maid’s Tragedy*,
Custom of the Country, *Loyal Subject*, *Chances*, *Prophetess*, *Double*
Marriage, *Knight of Malta*, *Love’s Cure*, *Woman’s Prize*, *Island*
Princess, *Night-Walker*, *Noble Kinsmen*, *Masque*, *Four Plays*;
 and probably in some others.

“able effect upon the persons that wrote for it; the
“setting of which in its due light being of some
“consequence to the Poet’s reputation, in a matter
“that has been objected to him, it is upon that
“account chiefly that this detail of his stage is
“entered into: Naked as it was, and quite motion-
“less; without scenes, or machinery, not so much
“as a trap-door for a ghost to rise out of; the spec-
“tator had nothing to aid him, or contribute to his
“deception: Fancy pieced out all these defects, as
“well as it could; and its powers were called out
“upon,—to imagine the same unchangeable spot to
“be a hall, a chamber, a palace, a cottage, a ship,
“lawn, field of battle, &c. This call upon their
“auditors’ fancy, to which the poets were driven by
“their stage’s penuriousness, made them hardy to
“go a step farther, and bring things upon it that
“cannot be represented on any stage; not even upon
“the present, under all its improvements, or under
“any other that can be imagined: But they thought,
“and thought rightly,—that it was but a strain or
“two more, and the same active power in their au-
“dience that could make them see places and actions
“of which there was not even the shadow, could
“picture others out to them of greater difficulty;
“such as—Pompey’s entertainment on shipboard,
“and the monument scenes in this act.”



PLAYERS' DEDICATION.

(F O L I O, 1647.)

To the Right Honourable PHILIP, earl of PEMBROKE and MONTGOMERY; baron Herbert of Cardiff and Sberland; lord Parr and Ross of Kendall; lord Fitz-Hugh, Marmyon, and Saint Quintin; knight of the most noble order of the Garter; and one of his Majesty's most Honourable Privy-Council: And our Singular Good Lord.

MY LORD,

THERE is none among all the names of Honour, that hath more encouraged the legitimate Muses of this latter age, than that which is owing to your family; whose coronet shines bright with the native lustre of its own jewels, which, with the access of some beams of Sidney, twisted with their flame, presents a constellation, from whose influence all good may be still expected upon wit and learning.

At this truth we rejoice, but yet aloof, and in our own valley; for we dare not approach with any capacity in ourselves to apply your smile, since we have only preserved, as trustees to the ashes of the Authors, what we exhibit to your Honour, it being no more our own, than those imperial crowns and garlands were the soldiers', who were honourably designed for their conveyance before the triumpher to the capitol.

But directed by the example of some, who once steered in our quality, and so fortunately aspired to

VOL. I,

a

choose

ii PLAYERS' DEDICATION.

choose your Honour, joined with your (now glorified) brother, patrons to the flowing compositions of the then expired sweet swan of Avon Shakespeare¹; and since, more particularly bound to your Lordship's most constant and diffusive goodness, from which we did for many calm years derive a subsistence to ourselves, and protection to the scene (now withered, and condemn'd, as we fear, to a long winter and sterility) we have presumed to offer to yourself, what before was never printed of these Authors.

Had they been less than all the treasure we had contracted in the whole age of poesy (some few Poems of their own excepted, which, already published, command their entertainment with all lovers of art and language) or were they not the most justly admired and beloved pieces of wit and the world, we should have taught ourselves a less ambition.

Be pleased to accept this humble tender of our duties; and, 'till we fail in our obedience to all your commands, vouchsafe we may be known by the cognizance and character of,

MY LORD,

Your Honour's most bounden,

JOHN LOWIN,	JOSEPH TAYLOR,
RICHARD ROBINSON,	ROBERT BENFEILD,
EYLÆRD SWANSTON,	THOMAS POLLARD,
HUGH CLEARKE,	WILLIAM ALLEN,
STEPHEN HAMMERTON,	THEOPHILUS BYRD.

¹ *The example of some, &c.] i. e.* Heminge and Condell; who in 1623 published the first edition of Shakespeare's Works. They dedicated them to this same nobleman, then earl of Montgomery, and his elder brother, William earl of Pembroke.

MR. SHIRLEY'S PREFACE.

(F O L I O, 1647.)

POETRY is the child of Nature, which, regulated and made beautiful by Art, presenteth the most harmonious of all other compositions; among which (if we rightly consider) the dramatical is the most absolute, in regard of those transcendent abilities which should wait upon the Composer; who must have more than the instruction of libraries (which of itself is but a cold contemplative knowledge), there being required in him a soul miraculously knowing and conversing with all mankind, enabling him to express not only the phlegm and folly of thick-skinned men, but the strength and maturity of the wise, the air and insinuations of the court, the discipline and resolution of the soldier, the virtues and passions of every noble condition, nay the counsels and characters of the greatest princes.

This, you will say, is a vast comprehension, and hath not happened in many ages. Be it then remembered, to the glory of our own, that all these are demonstrative and met in BEAUMONT and FLETCHER, whom but to mention is to throw a cloud upon all former names, and benight Posterity; this book being, without flattery, the greatest monument of the scene that Time and Humanity have produced, and must live, not only the crown and sole reputation of our own, but the stain of all other nations and languages: For it may be boldly averred, not one indiscretion hath branded this paper in all the lines, this being
a 2 the

iv MR. SHIRLEY'S PREFACE.

the authentic wit that made Blackfriars an academy, where the three hours' spectacle, while BEAUMONT and FLETCHER were presented, was usually of more advantage to the hopeful young heir, than a costly, dangerous, foreign travel, with the assistance of a governing monsieur or signor to boot; and it cannot be denied but that the young spirits of the time, whose birth and quality made them impatient of the slower ways of education, have from the attentive hearing these pieces, got ground in point of wit and carriage of the most severely-employed students, while these recreations were digested into rules, and the very pleasure did edify. How many passable discoursing dining wits stand yet in good credit, upon the bare stock of two or three of these single scenes!

And now, Reader, in this tragical age, where the theatre hath been so much out-acted, congratulate thy own happiness, that, in this silence of the stage, thou hast a liberty to read these inimitable Plays, to dwell and converse in these immortal groves, which were only shew'd our fathers in a conjuring-glass, as suddenly removed as represented; the landscape is now brought home by this optick, and the press, thought too pregnant before, shall be now look'd upon as greatest benefactor to Englishmen, that must acknowledge all the felicity of wit and words to this derivation.

You may here find passions raised to that excellent pitch, and by such insinuating degrees, that you shall not chuse but consent, and go along with them, finding yourself at last grown insensibly the very same person you read; and then stand, admiring the subtil tracks of your engagement. Fall on a scene of love, and you will never believe the Writers could have the least room left in their souls for another passion; peruse a scene of manly rage, and you would swear they cannot be expressed by the same hands; but both are so excellently wrought, you must confess none, but the same hands, could work them.

Would

MR. SHIRLEY'S PREFACE. v

Would thy melancholy have a cure? thou shalt laugh at Democritus himself; and but reading one piece of this comick variety, find thy exalted fancy in Elizium; and when thou art sick of this cure, (for the excess of delight may too much dilate thy soul) thou shalt meet almost in every leaf a soft purling passion or spring of sorrow, so powerfully wrought high by the tears of Innocence, and wronged lovers, it shall persuade thy eyes to weep into the stream, and yet smile when they contribute to their own ruins.

Infinitely more might be said of these rare copies; but let the ingenuous Reader¹ peruse them, and he will find them so able to speak their own worth, that they need not come into the world with a trumpet, since any one of these incomparable pieces, well understood, will prove a Preface to the rest; and if the Reader can taste the best wit ever trod our English stage, he will be forced himself to become a breathing panegyrick to them all.

Not to detain or prepare thee longer, be as capricious and sick-brained as Ignorance and Malice can make thee, here thou art rectified; or be as healthful as the inward calm of an honest heart, learning, and temper can state thy disposition, yet this book may be thy fortunate concernment and companion.

It is not so remote in time, but very many gentlemen may remember these Authors; and some, familiar in their conversation, deliver them upon every pleasant occasion so fluent, to talk a comedy. He must be a bold man that dares undertake to write their lives: What I have to say is, we have the precious remains; and as the wisest contemporaries acknowledge they lived a miracle, I am very confident this volume cannot die without one.

What more specially concerns these Authors and their Works is told thee by another hand, in the following epistle of the Stationer to the Readers.

¹ *Ingenuous Reader.*] In Coles's Dict. 1677, it is remarked, ' *Ingenuous* and *ingenious* are too often confounded.'

vi MR. SHIRLEY'S PREFACE.

Farewell: Read, and fear not thine own understanding; this Book will create a clear one in thee: And when thou hast considered thy purchase, thou wilt call the price of it a charity to thyself; and at the same time forgive

Thy friend,

And these Authors humble admirer,

JAMES SHIRLEY².

² *James Shirley.*] It is much to be regretted, that this ingenious gentleman did nothing more to the First Folio than writing the Preface; we should not then so justly lament the incorrectness of that Edition.

STATIONER'S ADDRESS.

(F O L I O, 1647.)

GENTLEMEN,

BEFORE you engage further, be pleased to take notice of these particulars. You have here a *new book*; I can speak it clearly; for of all this large volume of Comedies and Tragedies, not one, till now, was ever printed before. A Collection of Plays is commonly but a *new impression*, the scattered pieces which were printed single, being then only republished together: 'Tis otherwise here.

Next, as it is all *new*, so here is not any thing spurious or imposed: I had the originals from such as received them from the Authors themselves; by those, and none other, I publish this edition.

And as here is nothing but what is genuine and theirs, so you will find here are no *omissions*; you have not only *all* I could get, but *all* that you must ever expect. For (besides those which were formerly printed) there is not any Piece written by these Authors, either jointly or severally, but what are now published to the world in this volume. One only play I must except (for I mean to deal openly); it is a Comedy called the *Wild-Goose Chase*¹, which hath been long lost, and I fear irrecoverable; for a person of quality borrowed it from the actors many years since, and (by the negligence of a servant) it was

¹ *The Wild-Goose Chase.*] This Comedy, in the year 1652, was published in folio, by Lowin and Taylor, two of the Players, with a 'Dedication to the Honour'd, Few, Lovers of Dramatick Poetrie,' and several Commendatory Verses annexed.

viii STATIONER'S ADDRESS.

never returned; therefore now I put up this *fi quis*, that whosoever hereafter happily meets with it, shall be thankfully satisfied if he please to send it home.

Some Plays (you know) written by these Authors were heretofore printed: I thought not convenient to mix them with this volume, which of itself is entirely new. And indeed it would have rendered the book so voluminous, that ladies and gentlewomen would have found it scarce manageable, who in works of this nature must first be remembered. Besides, I considered those former pieces had been so long printed and reprinted, that many gentlemen were already furnished; and I would have none say, they pay twice for the same book.

One thing I must answer before it be objected; 'tis this: When these Comedies and Tragedies were presented on the stage, the actors omitted some scenes and passages (with the Authors' consent) as occasion led them; and when private friends desired a copy, they then (and justly too) transcribed what they acted: But now you have both *all* that *was acted*, and *all* that *was not*; even the perfect full originals, without the least mutilation; so that were the Authors living, (and sure they can never die) they themselves would challenge neither more nor less than what is here published; this volume being now so complete and finished, that the reader must expect no future alterations.

For literal errors committed by the printer, it is the fashion to ask pardon, and as much in fashion to take no notice of him that asks it; but in this also I have done my endeavour. 'Twere vain to mention the chargeableness of this work; for those who owned the manuscripts, too well knew their value to make a cheap estimate of any of these Pieces; and though another joined with me in the purchase and printing, yet the care and pains was wholly mine, which I found to be more than you will easily imagine, unless you knew into how many hands the originals
were

STATIONER'S ADDRESS. ix

were dispersed: They are all now happily met in this book, having escaped these public troubles, free and unmangled. Heretofore, when gentlemen desired but a copy of any of these Plays, the meanest piece here (if any may be called mean where every one is best) cost them more than four times the price you pay for the whole volume.

I should scarce have adventured in these slippery times on such a work as this, if knowing persons had not generally assured me that these Authors were the most unquestionable wits this kingdom hath afforded. Mr. Beaumont was ever acknowledged a man of a most strong and searching brain; and (his years considered) the most judicious wit these later ages have produced; he died young, for (which was an invaluable loss to this nation) he left the world when he was not full thirty years old. Mr. Fletcher survived, and lived till almost fifty; whereof the world now enjoys the benefit. It was once in my thoughts to have printed Mr. Fletcher's Works by themselves², because single and alone he would make a just volume; but since never parted while they lived, I conceived it not equitable to separate their ashes.

It becomes not me to say (though it be a known truth) that these Authors had not only high unexpressible gifts of Nature, but also excellent acquired parts, being furnished with arts and sciences by that liberal education they had at the University, which sure is the best place to make a great wit understand itself; this their works will soon make evident. I was very ambitious to have got Mr. Beaumont's picture; but could not possibly, though I spared no enquiry in those noble families whence he was descended, as also among those gentlemen that were his acquaintance when he was of the Inner-Temple: The best pictures, and those most like him,

² *Fletcher's Works by themselves.*] If Mr. Moseley could have made this separation, it is greatly to be regretted that he left us no intimation which plays were written by Fletcher alone.

x STATIONER'S ADDRESS.

you will find in this volume. This figure of Mr. Fletcher was cut by several original pieces, which his friends lent me; but withal they tell me, that his unimitable soul did shine through his countenance in such air and spirit, that the painters confessed it was not easy to express him: As much as could be, you have here, and the graver hath done his part.

Whatever I have seen of Mr. Fletcher's own hand, is free from interlining; and his friends affirm he never writ any one thing twice³: It seems he had that rare felicity to prepare and perfect all first in his own brain; to shape and attire his notions, to add or lop off, before he committed one word to writing, and never touched pen till all was to stand as firm and immutable as if engraven in brass or marble. But I keep you too long from those friends of his whom 'tis fitter for you to read; only accept of the honest endeavours of

One that is a Servant to you all,

HUMPHREY MOSELEY.

At the Prince's Arms, in
St. Paul's Church-Yard,
Feb. the 14th, 1646.

³ *He never writ any one thing twice.*] May we not suppose this to have been a sort of common-place compliment? but surely it is a very injudicious one. A similar assertion, applied to Shakespeare, has afforded much conversation in the literary world.

BOOKSELLERS' ADDRESS.

(F O L I O, 1679.)

COURTEOUS READER,

THE first edition of these Plays in this volume having found that acceptance as to give us encouragement to make a second impression, we were very desirous they might come forth as correct as might be: And we were very opportunely informed of a copy which an ingenious and worthy gentleman had taken the pains (or rather the pleasure) to read over; wherein he had all along corrected⁴ several faults (some very gross) which had crept in by the frequent imprinting of them. His corrections were the more to be valued, because he had an intimacy with both our Authors, and had been a spectator of most of them when they were acted in their life-time. This therefore we resolved to purchase at any rate; and accordingly with no small cost obtained it. From the same hand also we received several Prologues and Epilogues, with the Songs appertaining to each Play, which were not in the former edition, but are now inserted in their proper places. Besides, in this edition you have the addition of no fewer than seventeen Plays more than were in the former, which we have taken the pains and care to collect, and print out of quarto in this volume, which for distinction sake are marked with a star in the catalogue of them facing the first page

⁴ *He had all along corrected, &c.*] Notwithstanding this boast, in many plays, the First Folio is more correct than the Second.

of

xii BOOKSELLERS' ADDRESS.

of the book. And whereas in several of the Plays there were wanting the names of the persons represented therein, in this edition you have them all prefixed, with their qualities; which will be a great ease to the Reader. Thus every way perfect and complete have you, all both Tragedies and Comedies that were ever writ by our Authors, a pair of the greatest Wits and most ingenious Poets of their age; from whose worth we should but detract by our most studied commendations.

If our care and endeavours to do our Authors right (in an incorrupt and genuine edition of their Works) and thereby to gratify and oblige the reader, be but requited with a suitable entertainment, we shall be encouraged to bring Ben Jonson's two volumes into one, and publish them in this form; and also to reprint Old Shakespeare: Both which are designed by

Yours,

Ready to serve you,

JOHN MARTYN,

HENRY HERRINGMAN,

RICHARD MARIOT.

P R E F A C E',
GIVING SOME ACCOUNT OF THE
AUTHORS AND THEIR WRITINGS.

(O C T A V O, 1711.)

FRANCIS BEAUMONT, Esquire, was descended from the ancient family of that name, at Gracedieu in Leicestershire, and brother to Sir Henry Beaumont, Knight, of the same place; his grandfather was John Beaumont, Master of the Rolls; and his father Francis Beaumont, judge of the Common-Pleas, who married Anne daughter of George Pierrepont of Home-Pierrepont, Nottinghamshire. He was educated at Cambridge, and after at the Inner-Temple. He died before he was thirty years of age, and was buried the 9th of March, 1615, at the entrance into St. Benedict's Chapel in

¹ *Preface.*] To this *Preface*, Mr. Sympfon, in the Edition of 1750, prefixes the following INTRODUCTION.

'TIS really surprizing that all we know of two such illustrious Authors as Mr. Beaumont and Mr. Fletcher were is, That we know nothing. The Composer of the following *Preface*, and Editor of their Works in 1711, *calls* it 'An Account of the Lives, &c. of his 'Authors.' But he greatly *miscalls* it, for that they were born in such a year, and died in such a one, is all he has given us of their history and actions; and by what I can find, had they never wrote a comedy, we should not have known, but upon Mr. Shirley's word, that in conversation they ever had talked one.

Our Authors, 'tis true, take up articles in two Dictionaries, but these contain little more than Remarks on their Dramatic Performances. Believing therefore that the *no account*, of the following *Preface*, contains as *good an account* of our Authors as any can be given, I submit it to the Reader pure and unmix'd, as it came out of
the

Westminster-Abbey. He left one daughter behind him, Mrs. Frances Beaumont, who died in Leicestershire since the year 1700: She had been possessed of several Poems of her father's writing, but they were lost at sea coming from Ireland, where she had sometime lived in the Duke of Ormond's family. There was published, after our Author's death, a small book containing several Poems under his name, and among

the Editor's hands, without any alteration or interpolation at all, only striking out a long quotation from a very imperfect answer of Mr. Dryden's to the objections made against Shakespeare and our Authors by Mr. Rhymer.

But their Dramatic is no better known than their Civil History; I mean, what part each sustain'd in their poetical capacities. Did Beaumont plan, and Fletcher raise the superstructure? Then 'tis no wonder the Work should be all of a piece.

But if each sustain'd both characters (as I think is so plain as not to be doubted) 'tis strange there should appear no greater diversity in their writings, when the separate parts came to be put together.

For, unless I be greatly mistaken, we can't say that *here* one laid down the pencil, and *there* the other took it up, no more than we can say of any two contiguous colours in the rainbow, here *this* ends and there *that* begins, so fine is the transition, that

——— *Spectantia lumina fallit,*
Usque adeo quod tangit idem est.———

Mr. Seward will lay before the Reader what *internal evidence* he thinks he has discover'd of a distinction of their hands; but in general Beaumont's accuracy, and Fletcher's wit, are so undistinguishable, that were we not sure, to a demonstration, that the Masque was the former's, and the Shepherdess the latter's sole production, they might each have pass'd for the concurrent labour of both, or have changed hands, and the *last* been taken for Beaumont's and the *former* for Fletcher's.

And where is the wonder, that Fletcher's Works, which he wrote singly after Beaumont's death, should carry the same strength, wit, manner, and spirit in them, so as not to be discern'd from what both wrote in conjunction, when as Sir J. Berkenhead tells us,

- Beaumont died; yet left in legacy
- His rules and standard-wit (Fletcher) to thee;
- Still the same planet, tho' not fill'd so soon,
- A two horn'd crescent then, now one full moon.
- Joint Love before, now Honour doth provoke;
- So th' old twin giants forcing a huge oak,
- One slipp'd his footing, th' other sees him fall,
- Grasp'd the whole tree and single held up all.'

And since I have quoted one poetical authority, let me give another (with a little variation) from the immortal Spenser, which may farther illustrate,

them the story of Salmacis, from the Metamorphoses of Ovid ; and a translation of the Remedy of Love, from the same Author. The Poem of Bosworth-Field, which has been universally esteemed, was written by his brother John Beaumont.

JOHN FLETCHER, Esquire (son of Dr. Richard Fletcher, who was created by Queen Elizabeth Bishop of Bristol, and after removed to Worcester, and from thence, in the year 1593, to London), was educated at Cambridge, and probably at Bennet-College, to which his father was by his will a benefactor. He died of the plague in the first year of the reign of King Charles the First, and was buried in St. Mary Overy's Church in Southwark, August the 19th, 1625, in the forty-ninth year of his age.

Several of their Plays were printed in quarto while the Authors were living ; and in the year 1645,

illustrate, if not confirm our opinion. The Poet speaking of Priamond, after he had died by Cambell's hand in single combat, says,

- ' His weary ghost assoyl'd from fleshly band
- ' Did not, as others wont, directly fly
- ' Unto her rest in Pluto's griesly land,
- ' Ne into air did vanish presently,
- ' Ne chaunged was into a star in sky,
- ' But by traduction was eftssoon deriv'd
- ' Into his other *brother* that surviv'd,
- ' In whom he liv'd anew, of former life depriv'd.

The application of these lines to our Authors, is so *easy* that no Reader can *miss* it, and the reason given for the sameness of manner, spirit, &c. in their *joint* and *single* performances, so clear for a *poetical one*, that no one can *dispute* it.

And as to *external evidence*, though we have enough of it, 'tis so little to be depended on, that it has no weight with me, whatever it may have with the intelligent Reader. The testimony of the versifiers, before our Authors Works, is so extravagant on the one side or on the other, that if we trust *this* panegyrist, Fletcher was the sole Author, if *that* Beaumont wrote alone, and if a *third*, the whole was the united work and labour of both.

The printers of the quarto editions are no more concordant ; for in different years and editions, you have sometimes Beaumont's and Fletcher's name, and sometimes the latter's singly before the same Play.

The Prologue and Epilogue Writers may perhaps be more depended upon, but they don't go quite through with their work ; for neither the quarto copies, nor the thirty-four Plays in the 1647 edition, have

(twenty years after the death of Fletcher, and thirty after that of Beaumont) there was published in folio a collection of such of their Plays as had not before been printed, amounting to between thirty and forty. At the beginning of this Volume are inserted a great many Commendatory Verses, written in praise of the Authors by persons of their acquaintance, and the most eminent of that age for wit and quality. This Collection was published by Mr. Shirley, after the shutting up of the Theatres, and dedicated to the Earl of Pembroke, by ten of the most famous actors, who profess to have taken great care in the edition; they lament their not being able to procure any picture of Mr. Beaumont, from which to take his effigies, as they had done that of Mr. Fletcher: But, through the favour of the present Earl of Dorset, that is now supplied; the head of Mr. Beaumont, and that of Mr. Fletcher, being taken from originals in the noble collection his lordship has at Knowles.

In the year 1679, there was an edition in folio of all their Plays published, containing those formerly printed in quarto, and those in the before-mentioned folio edition. Several of the Commendatory Verses are left out before that impression; but many of them relating to particulars of the Authors, or their Plays, they are prefixed to this; and a large omission of part

have all their full quotas of head and tail pieces; and of these we have, there are few that speak out, and tell us from whose labours, their audiences were to expect either pleasure or instruction.

However this evidence, such as it is, I shall lay before the Reader, by way of notes to the alphabetical account of our Authors Pieces (as drawn up by Dr. Langbaine) towards the conclusion of the following Preface; and leave it to his judgment to determine, how far upon such testimony, the Authors were singly or jointly concerned; only I must give this caution, that where the Prologue mentions Poet, or Author in the singular, there I suppose Fletcher is only designed, where in the plural, Beaumont is included.

[The *evidence* Mr. Symphon here speaks of, the Reader will find, with much additional information, in the title of each Play of the present Edition.]

of

of the last act of the Tragedy of Thierry and Theodoret, is supplied in this.

The frequent and great audiences that several of their plays continue to bring, sufficiently declares the value this age has for them is equal to that of the former; and three such extraordinary writers as Mr. Waller, the duke of Buckingham, and John late earl of Rochester, selecting each of them one of their plays to alter for the stage, adds not a little to their reputation.

The Maid's Tragedy² was very frequently acted after the Restoration, and with the greatest applause; Mr. Hart playing Amintor, Major Mohun, Melantius, and Mrs. Marshal, Evadne, equal to any other parts for which they were deservedly famous. But the latter ending of that play, where the king was killed, making it upon some particular occasion not thought proper to be farther represented, it was by private order from the court silenced. This was the reason Mr. Waller undertook the altering the latter part of that play, as it is now printed in the last edition of his Works.—Upon which alteration, this following remark was made by an eminent hand:

‘ It is not to be doubted who sat for the two brothers characters. ’Twas agreeable to Mr. Waller’s temper to soften the rigour of the Tragedy, as he expresses it; but whether it be agreeable to the nature of Tragedy itself, to make every thing come off easily, I leave to the criticks.’

The duke of Buckingham, so celebrated for writing the Rehearsal, made the two last acts of the

² As our Authors were planning one of their plays (*this most probably*) in a tavern, Mr. Fletcher was over-heard, by some of the house, to say, *I’ll undertake to kill the King*. Words in appearance so treasonable as these were, could not long be kept concealed, and the discovery of ’em had like to have cost our Poet dear: But it being demonstrated that this design was only against the person of a *scenical sovereign*, our Author was freed from any farther trouble, and the intended process entirely dropp’d. *Vide Winstanley’s English Poets.*
Symphon.

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However this evidence, such as it is, I shall lay before the Reader, by way of notes to the alphabetical account of our Authors Pieces (as drawn up by Dr. Langbaine) towards the conclusion of the following Preface; and leave it to his judgment to determine, how far upon such testimony, the Authors were singly or jointly concerned; only I must give this caution, that where the Prologue mentions Poet, or Author in the singular, there I suppose Fletcher is only designed, where in the plural, Beaumont is included.

[The *evidence* Mr. Symphon here speaks of, the Reader will find, with much additional information, in the title of each Play of the present Edition.]

of

of the last act of the Tragedy of Thierry and Theodoret, is supplied in this.

The frequent and great audiences that several of their plays continue to bring, sufficiently declares the value this age has for them is equal to that of the former; and three such extraordinary writers as Mr. Waller, the duke of Buckingham, and John late earl of Rochester, selecting each of them one of their plays to alter for the stage, adds not a little to their reputation.

The Maid's Tragedy² was very frequently acted after the Restoration, and with the greatest applause; Mr. Hart playing Amintor, Major Mohun, Melantius, and Mrs. Marshal, Evadne, equal to any other parts for which they were deservedly famous. But the latter ending of that play, where the king was killed, making it upon some particular occasion not thought proper to be farther represented, it was by private order from the court silenced. This was the reason Mr. Waller undertook the altering the latter part of that play, as it is now printed in the last edition of his Works.—Upon which alteration, this following remark was made by an eminent hand:

‘ It is not to be doubted who sat for the two brothers characters. ’Twas agreeable to Mr. Waller’s temper to soften the rigour of the Tragedy, as he expresses it; but whether it be agreeable to the nature of Tragedy itself, to make every thing come off easily, I leave to the criticks.’

The duke of Buckingham, so celebrated for writing the Rehearsal, made the two last acts of the

² As our Authors were planning one of their plays (*this most probably*) in a tavern, Mr. Fletcher was over-heard, by some of the house, to say, *I’ll undertake to kill the King*. Words in appearance so treasonable as these were, could not long be kept concealed, and the discovery of ’em had like to have cost our Poet dear: But it being demonstrated that this design was only against the person of a *scenical sovereign*, our Author was freed from any farther trouble, and the intended process entirely dropp’d. *Vide Winstanley’s English Poets.*
Symphon.

Chances almost new. Mr. Hart play'd the part of Don John to the highest satisfaction of the audience; the play had a great run, and ever since has been followed as one of the best entertainments of the stage. His Grace, after that, bestowed some time in altering another play of our Authors, called Philaster, or Love Lies a-Bleeding: He made very considerable alterations in it, and took it with him, intending to finish it the last journey he made to Yorkshire in the year 1686. I cannot learn what is become of the play with his Grace's alterations, but am very well informed it was since the Revolution in the hands of Mr. Nevil Payne, who was imprisoned at Edinburgh in the year 1689.

The alterations in *Valentinian*, by the earl of Rochester, amount to about a third part of the whole; but his lordship died before he had done all he intended to it. It was acted with very great applause, Mr. Goodman playing *Valentinian*, Mr. Betterton, *Æcius*, and Mrs. Barry, *Lucina*. My lord died in the year 1680, and the play was acted in the year 1684, and the same year published by Mr. Robert Wolsty, with a Preface, giving a large account of my lord, and his writings. This play, with the alterations, is printed at the end of his lordship's poems in octavo.

Mr. Dryden, in his *Essay of Dramatic Poetry*, page 17, (in the first volume of the folio edition of his Works) in a comparison of the French and English Comedy, says, 'As for comedy, repartee
' is one of its chiefest graces. The greatest pleasure
' of an audience is a chase of wit kept up on both
' sides, and swiftly managed: And this our fore-
' fathers (if not we) have had in Fletcher's plays,
' to a much higher degree of perfection than the
' French poets can arrive at.'

And in the same *Essay*, page 19, he says, 'Beau-
' mont and Fletcher had, with the advantage of
' Shakespeare's wit, which was their precedent, great
' natural

' natural gifts, improved by study. Beaumont
 ' especially being so accurate a judge of plays, that
 ' Ben Jonson, while he lived, submitted all his
 ' writings to his censure, and 'tis thought used his
 ' judgment in correcting, if not contriving all his
 ' plots. What value he had for him appears by the
 ' verses he wrote to him, and therefore I need speak
 ' no farther of it. The first play that brought
 ' Fletcher and him in esteem, was *Philaster*; for
 ' before that, they had written two or three very
 ' unsuccessfully; as the like is reported of Ben
 ' Jonson, before he writ *Every Man in his Humour*:
 ' Their plots were generally more regular than
 ' Shakespeare's, especially those that were made before
 ' Beaumont's death: And they understood and imi-
 ' tated the conversation of gentlemen much better;
 ' whose wild debaucheries, and quickness of wit in
 ' repartees, no poet can ever paint as they have done.
 ' Humour, which Ben Jonson derived from par-
 ' ticular persons, they made it not their business to
 ' describe; they represented all the passions very
 ' lively, but above all *love*. I am apt to believe
 ' the English language in them arrived to its highest
 ' perfection; what words have since been taken in,
 ' are rather superfluous than necessary. Their plays
 ' are now the most pleasant and frequent entertain-
 ' ments of the stage, two of theirs being acted through
 ' the year, for one of Shakespeare's or Jonson's; the
 ' reason is, because there is a certain gaiety in their
 ' comedies, and pathos in their more serious plays,
 ' which suits generally with all mens humour.
 ' Shakespeare's language is likewise a little obsolete,
 ' and Ben Jonson's wit comes short of theirs.'

This Essay of Mr. Dryden's was written in the year 1666³.

Mr. Dryden said he had been informed, that after Beaumont's death, Mr. James Shirley was consulted

³ ——— in the year 1666.] After this sentence was inserted Mr. Dryden's Remarks on Rymer, which Symphon, in his Introduction,
 b 2 p. xiv,

by Fletcher in the plotting several of his plays. It does seem that Shirley did supply many that were

p. xiv, mentions having rejected. They here follow, with the Prefacer's Observations.

“ IN the year 1677, Mr. Rymer (now Historiographer Royal) published ‘The Tragedies of the Last Age considered, in a Letter to ‘Fleetwood Shepherd, Esq.’ In this Treatise he criticises upon Rollo Duke of Normandy, the Maid’s Tragedy, and the King and No King; all three written by our Authors, and the most taking Plays then acted. He has there endeavoured to the utmost the exposing their failings, without taking the least notice of their beauties; Mr. Rymer sent one of his books as a present to Mr. Dryden, who on the blank leaves, before the beginning, and after the end of the book, made several remarks, as if he designed an answer to Mr. Rymer’s reflections; they are of Mr. Dryden’s own hand-writing, and may be seen at the publisher’s of this book; ’tis to be wished he had put his last hand to ’em, and made the connection closer, but just as he left them be pleased to take them here *verbatim* inserted.

“ He who undertakes to answer this excellent critick of Mr. Rymer, in behalf of our English Poets against the Greek, ought to do it in this manner.

“ Either by yielding to him the greatest part of what he contends for, which consists in this, that the *μυθος* (*i. e.*) the design and conduct of it is more conducing in the Greeks, to those ends of tragedy which Aristotle and he propose, namely, to cause terror and pity; yet the granting this does not set the Greeks above the English Poets.

“ But the answerer ought to prove two things; First, That the fable is not the greatest master-piece of a tragedy, though it be the foundation of it.

“ Secondly, That other ends, as suitable to the nature of tragedy, may be found in the English, which were not in the Greek.

“ Aristotle places the fable first; not *quoad dignitatem*, *sed quoad fundamentum*; for a fable never so movingly contrived, to those ends of his, pity and terror, will operate nothing on our affections, except the characters, manners, thoughts and words are suitable.

“ So that it remains for Mr. Rymer to prove, That in all those, or the greatest part of them, we are inferior to Sophocles and Euripides; and this he has offered at in some measure, but, I think, a little partially to the ancients.

“ To make a true judgment in this competition, between the Greek Poets and the English in tragedy, consider,

“ I. How Aristotle has defined a tragedy.

“ II. What he assigns the end of it to be.

“ III. What he thinks the beauties of it.

“ IV. The means to attain the end proposed. Compare the Greek and English tragic Poets justly and without partiality, according to those rules.

“ Then, Secondly, consider, whether Aristotle has made a just definition

left imperfect, and that the old players gave some remains, or imperfect plays of Fletcher's to Shirley

definition of tragedy, of its parts, of its ends, of its beauties; and whether he having not seen any others but those of Sophocles, Euripides, &c. had or truly could determine what all the excellencies of tragedy are, and wherein they consist.

“ Next show in what ancient tragedy was deficient; for example, in the narrowness of its plots, and fewness of persons, and try whether that be not a fault in the Greek Poets; and whether their excellency was so great, when the variety was visibly so little; or whether what they did was not very easy to do.

“ Then make a judgment on what the English have added to their beauties: As for example, not only more plot, but also new passions; as namely, that of love, scarce touched on by the ancients, except in this one example of Phædra, cited by Mr. Rymer, and in that how short they were of Fletcher.

“ Prove also that love, being an heroic passion, is fit for tragedy, which cannot be denied; because of the example alledged of Phædra: And how far Shakespeare has outdone them in friendship, &c.

“ To return to the beginning of this enquiry, consider if pity and terror be enough for tragedy to move, and I believe upon a true definition of Tragedy, it will be found that its work extends farther, and that it is to reform manners by delightful representation of human life in great persons, by way of dialogue. If this be true, then not only pity and terror are to be moved as the only means to bring us to virtue, but generally love to virtue, and hatred to vice, by shewing the rewards of one, and punishments of the other; at least by rendering virtue always amiable, though it be shown unfortunate; and vice detestable, though it be shown triumphant.

“ If then the encouragement of virtue, and discouragement of vice, be the proper end of poetry in tragedy: Pity and terror, though good means, are not the only: For all the passions in their turns are to be set in a ferment; as joy, anger, love, fear, are to be used as the poets common places; and a general concernment for the principal actors is to be rais'd, by making them appear such in their characters, their words and actions, as will interest the audience in their fortunes.

“ And if after all, in a large sense, pity comprehends this concernment for the good, and terror includes detestation for the bad; then let us consider whether the English have not answered this end of tragedy, as well as the ancients, or perhaps better.

“ And here Mr. Rymer's objections against these plays are to be impartially weighed; that we may see whether they are of weight enough to turn the balance against our countrymen.

“ It is evident those plays which he arraigns have moved both those passions in a high degree upon the stage.

“ To give the glory of this away from the poet, and to place it upon the actors, seems unjust.

“ One reason is, because whatever actors they have found, the event

to make up : And it is from hence, that in the first act of Love's Pilgrimage, there is a scene of an

has been the same, that is, the same passions have been always moved : Which shows, that there is something of force and merit in the plays themselves, conducing to the design of raising those two passions : And suppose them ever to have been excellently acted, yet action only adds grace, vigour, and more life upon the stage, but cannot give it wholly where it is not first. But secondly, I dare appeal to those who have never seen them acted, if they have not found those two passions moved within them ; and if the general voice will carry it, Mr. Rymer's prejudice will take off his single testimony.

“ This being matter of fact, is reasonably to be established by this appeal : As if one man say it is night, when the rest of the world conclude it to be day, there needs no further argument against him that it is so.

“ If he urge, that the general taste is depraved ; his arguments to prove this can at best but evince, that our Poets took not the best way to raise those passions ; but experience proves against him, that those means which they have used, have been successful, and have produced them.

“ And one reason of that success is, in my opinion, this, that Shakespeare and Fletcher have written to the genius of the age and nation in which they liv'd : For though Nature, as he objects, is the same in all places, and Reason too the same ; yet the climate, the age, the dispositions of the people to whom a poet writes, may be so different, that what pleased the Greeks, would not satisfy an English audience.

“ And if they proceeded upon a foundation of truer reason to please the Athenians, than Shakespeare and Fletcher to please the English, it only shows that the Athenians were a more judicious people : But the Poet's business is certainly to please the audience.

“ Whether our English audience have been pleased hitherto with acorns, as he calls it, or with bread, is the next question ; that is, whether the means which Shakespeare and Fletcher have used in their Plays to raise those passions before-named, be better applied to the ends by the Greek Poets than by them ; and perhaps we shall not grant him this wholly. Let it be yielded that a writer is not to run down with the stream, or to please the people by their own usual methods, but rather to reform their judgments : It still remains to prove that our theatre needs this total reformation.

“ The faults which he has found in their designs, are rather wittily aggravated in many places, than reasonably urged ; and as much may be returned on the Greeks, by one who were as witty as himself.

“ Secondly, They destroy not, if they are granted, the foundation of the fabrick, only take away from the beauty of the symmetry : For example : The faults in the character of the King and No King, are not, as he makes them, such as render him detestable ; but only imperfections which accompany human nature, and for the most part
excused

Ofster, transcribed *verbatim* out of Ben Jonson's New Inn, act iii. scene i. which play was written

excused by the violence of his love; so that they destroy not our pity or concernment for him. This answer may be applied to most of his objections of that kind.

“ And Rollo committing many murders, when he is answerable but for one, is too severely arraigned by him; for it adds to our horror and detestation of the criminal. And poetick justice is not neglected neither, for we stab him in our minds for every offence which he commits; and the point which the poet is to gain upon the audience, is not so much in the death of an offender, as the raising an horror of his crimes.

“ That the criminal should neither be wholly guilty, nor wholly innocent, but so participating of both, as to move both pity and terror, is certainly a good rule; but not perpetually to be observed, for that were to make all tragedies too much alike; which objection he foresaw, but has not fully answered.

“ To conclude therefore, if the plays of the ancients are more correctly plotted, ours are more beautifully written; and if we can raise passions as high on worse foundations, it shows our genius in tragedy is greater, for in all other parts of it the English have manifestly excelled them.

“ For the fable itself, 'tis in the English more adorned with episodes, and larger than in the Greek Poets, consequently more diverting; for, if the action be but one, and that plain, without any counterturn of design or episode (*i. e.*) under-plot, how can it be so pleasing as the English, which have both under-plot, and a turned design, which keeps the audience in expectation of the catastrophe? whereas in the Greek Poets we see through the whole design at first?

“ For the characters, they are neither so many nor so various in Sophocles and Euripides, as in Shakespeare and Fletcher; only they are more adapted to those ends of tragedy which Aristotle commends to us; pity and terror.

“ The manners flow from the characters, and consequently must partake of their advantages and disadvantages.

“ The thoughts and words, which are the fourth and fifth beauties of tragedy, are certainly more noble and more poetical in the English than in the Greek, which must be proved by comparing them somewhat more equitable than Mr. Rymer has done.

“ After all, we need not yield that the English way is less conducing to move pity and terror; because they often shew virtue oppress'd, and vice punished; where they do not both or either, they are not to be defended.

“ That we may the less wonder why pity and terror are not now the only springs on which our tragedies move, and that Shakespeare may be more excused, Rapin confesses that the French tragedies now all run upon the *tendre*, and gives the reason, because love is the passion which most predominates in our souls; and that therefore the

long after Fletcher died, and transplanted into Love's Pilgrimage after the printing the New-Inn, which

passions represented become insipid, unless they are conformable to the thoughts of the audience; but it is to be concluded, that this passion works not now among the French so strongly, as the other two did amongst the ancients: Amongst us, who have a stronger genius for writing, the operations from the writing are much stronger; for the raising of Shakespeare's passions are more from the excellency of the words and thoughts, than the justness of the occasion; and if he has been able to pick single occasions, he has never founded the whole reasonably, yet by the genius of poetry, in writing he has succeeded.

" The parts of a poem, tragic or heroic, are,

" I. The fable itself.

" II. The order or manner of its contrivance, in relation of the parts to the whole.

" III. The manners, or decency of the characters in speaking or acting what is proper for them, and proper to be shewn by the poet.

" IV. The thoughts which express the manners.

" V. The words which express those thoughts.

" In the last of these Homer excels Virgil, Virgil all other ancient poets, and Shakespeare all modern poets.

" For the second of these, the order; the meaning is, that a fable ought to have a beginning, middle, and an end, all just and natural, so that that part which is the middle, could not naturally be the beginning or end, and so of the rest; all are depending one on another, like the links of a curious chain.

" If terror and pity are only to be rais'd; certainly this author follows Aristotle's rules, and Sophocles and Euripides's example; but joy may be rais'd too, and that doubly, either by seeing a wicked man punished, or a good man at last fortunate; or perhaps indignation, to see wickedness prosperous, and goodness depressed: Both these may be profitable to the end of tragedy, reformation of manners; but the last improperly, only as it begets pity in the audience; tho' Aristotle, I confess, places tragedies of this kind in the second form.

" And, if we should grant that the Greeks performed this better; perhaps it may admit a dispute whether pity and terror are either the prime, or at least the only ends of tragedy.

" It is not enough that Aristotle has said so, for Aristotle drew his models of tragedy from Sophocles and Euripides; and if he had seen ours, might have changed his mind.

" And chiefly we have to say (what I hinted on pity and terror in the last paragraph save one) that the punishment of vice, and reward of virtue, are the most adequate ends of tragedy, because most conducing to good example of life; now pity is not so easily raised for a criminal (as the ancient tragedy always represents his chief person such) as it is for an innocent man and the suffering of innocence and punishment of the offender, is of the nature of English Tragedy; contrary

was in the year 1630. And two of the plays printed under the name of Fletcher, *viz.* the Coronation,

contrary in the Greek, innocence is unhappy often, and the offender escapes.

“ Then we are not touched with the sufferings of any sort of men so much as of lovers ; and this was almost unknown to the ancients ; so that they neither administered poetical justice (of which Mr. Rymer boasts) so well as we, neither knew they the best common-place of pity, which is love.

“ He therefore unjustly blames us for not building upon what the ancients left us, for it seems, upon consideration of the premises, that we have wholly finished what they begun.

“ My judgment on this piece is this ; that it is extremely learned ; but that the author of it is better read in the Greek than in the English Poets ; that all writers ought to study this critick as the best account I have ever seen of the ancients ; that the model of tragedy he has here given, is excellent, and extreme correct ; but that it is not the only model of all tragedy ; because it is too much circumscribed in plot, characters, &c. and lastly, that we may be taught here justly to admire and imitate the ancients, without giving them the preference, with this author, in prejudice to our own country.

“ Want of method, in this excellent treatise, makes the thoughts of the Author sometimes obscure.

“ His meaning, that pity and terror are to be moved, is that they are to be moved as the means conducing to the ends of tragedy, which are pleasure and instruction.

“ And these two ends may be thus distinguished. The chief ends of the poet is to please ; for his immediate reputation depends on it.

“ The great end of the poem is to instruct, which is performed by making pleasure the vehicle of that instruction : For poetry is an art, and all arts are made to profit.

“ The pity which the Poet is to labour for, is for the criminal, not for those, or him, whom he has murdered, or who have been the occasion of the tragedy : The terror is likewise in the punishment of the same criminal, who if he be represented too great an offender, will not be pitied ; if altogether innocent, his punishment will be unjust.

“ Another obscurity is where he says, Sophocles perfected tragedy, by introducing the third actor ; that is, he meant three kinds of action, one company singing, or speaking, another playing on the musick, a third dancing.

“ Rapin attributes more to the *diſtio*, that is, to the words and discourses of a tragedy, than Aristotle has done, who places them in the last rank of beauties ; perhaps only last in order, because they are the last product of the design of the disposition or connexion of its parts, of the characters, of the manners of those characters, and of the thoughts of proceeding from those manners.

“ Rapin's words are remarkable :

‘ ’Tis

and the Little Thief, have been claimed by Shirley to be his; 'tis probable they were left imperfect by one, and finished by the other.

Mr. Langbaine, in his account of the Dramatic Poets, printed in the year 1691, is very particular upon the several plays of our Authors, and therefore I shall conclude with transcribing from him, page 204. *viz.* ' Mr. Beaumont was a master of a good wit, ' and a better judgment, that Mr. Jonson himself ' thought it no disparagement to submit his writings ' to his correction. Mr. Fletcher's wit was equal to ' Mr. Beaumont's judgment, and was so luxuriant, ' that like superfluous branches it was frequently ' pruned by his judicious partner. These Poets perfectly understood breeding, and therefore successfully copied the conversation of gentlemen. They ' knew how to describe the manners of the age; and ' Fletcher had a peculiar talent in expressing all his ' thoughts with life and briskness. No man ever ' understood or drew the passions more lively than he; ' and his witty raillery was so dressed, that it rather ' pleased than disgusted the modest part of his audience. In a word, Fletcher's fancy and Beaumont's ' judgment combined, produced such Plays, as will ' remain monuments of their wit to all posterity. ' Mr. Fletcher himself, after Mr. Beaumont's death, ' composed several Dramatic Pieces, which were ' worthy the pen of so great a master.' And this Mr. Cartwright alludes to, in his verses before the book.

" 'Tis not the admirable intrigue, the surprizing events, and extraordinary incidents that make the beauty of a tragedy, 'tis the discourses, when they are natural and passionate.

" So are Shakespeare's."

' Here Mr. Dryden breaks off.

' About a year after Mr. Rymer's publishing his criticism, he printed a tragedy written by himself in rhyme, called Edgar; or, The English Monarch; an heroick tragedy, dedicated to King Charles the Second; this Play never appeared on the stage, the players not thinking it worth their while, nor has any one made any criticisms upon that.'

The

The following verses, put under his folio picture, were written by Sir John Berkenhead.

Felicitis ævi, ac Præfulis natus; comes
BEAUMONTIO; sic, quippe Parnassus, biceps;
FLETCHERUS unam in pyramida furcas agens.
Struxit chorum plus simplicem vates duplex;
Plus duplicem solus; nec ullum transtulit;
Nec transferrendus: Dramatum æterni sales,
Anglo theatro, orbi, sibi, superstites.
FLETCHERE, facies absque vultu pingitur;
Quantus! vel umbram circuit nemo tuam.

There are fifty-two plays written by these Authors, each of which I shall mention alphabetically.

Beggars' Bush, a Comedy. This Play I have seen several times acted with applause.

Bonduca, a Tragedy. The plot of this Play is borrowed from Tacitus's Annals, lib. 14. See Milton's History of England, book 2. *Ubalduino de Vita delle Donne Illustri del Regno d' Inghelterra & Scotia*, p. 7. &c.

Bloody Brother, or *Rollo Duke of Normandy*, a Tragedy much in request; and notwithstanding Mr. Rymer's criticisms on it, has still the good fortune to please: It being frequently acted by the present company of actors, at the Queen's Playhouse in Dorset-Garden. The design of this Play is history: See Herodian, lib. 4. *Xiphilini Epit. Dion. in Vit. Ant. Caracallæ*. Part of the language is copied from Seneca's Thebais.

Captain, a Comedy.

Chances, a Comedy, revived by the late Duke of Buckingham, and very much improved; being acted with extraordinary applause at the Theatre in Dorset-Garden, and printed with the alterations, London, 4to, 1682. This Play is built on a Novel written by the famous Spaniard Miguel de Cervantes, called *The Lady Cornelia*; which the Reader may read at large in a folio volume called *Six Exemplary Novels*.

Coronation, a Tragi-Comedy.

Coxcomb, a Comedy, which was revived at the Theatre-Royal, the Prologue being spoken by Joe Haines.

Cupid's Revenge, a Tragedy.

Custom of the Country, a Tragi-Comedy. This is accounted an excellent Play; the plot of Rutilio, Duarte, and Guionar, is founded on one of Malespini's Novels, deca. 6. nov. 6.

Double

Double Marriage, a Tragedy, which has been revived some years ago; as I learn from a new Prologue printed in Covent-Garden Drollery, p. 14.

Elder Brother, a Comedy, which has been acted with good applause.

Faithful Shepherdess, a Pastoral, writ by Mr. Fletcher, and commended by two copies written by the judicious Beaumont, and the learned Jonson, which are inserted among the Commendatory Poems at the beginning of this Edition. When this Pastoral was first acted before their Majesties at Somerset-House on Twelfth-Night, 1633, instead of a Prologue, there was a Song in Dialogue, sung between a Priest and a Nymph, which was writ by Sir William D'Avenant; and an Epilogue was spoken by the Lady Mary Mordant, which the Reader may read in Covent-Garden Drollery, p. 86.

Fair Maid of the Inn, a Tragi-Comedy. Mariana's disowning Cæsario for her son, and the Duke's injunction to marry him, is related by Caussin in his Holy Court, and is transcribed by Wanley in his History of Man, fol. book 3. chap. 26.

False One, a Tragedy. This Play is founded on the adventures of Julius Cæsar in Ægypt, and his amours with Cleopatra. See Suetonius, Plutarch, Dion, Appian, Florus, Eutropius, Orosius, &c.

Four Plays, or Moral Representations in One; viz. *The Triumph of Honour*; *The Triumph of Love*; *The Triumph of Death*; *The Triumph of Time*. I know not whether ever these Representations appeared on the stage, or no. *The Triumph of Honour* is founded on Boccace his Novels, day 10. nov. 5. *The Triumph of Love*, on the same Author, day 5. nov. 8. *The Triumph of Death*, on a Novel in The Fortunate, Deceived, and Unfortunate Lovers, part 3. nov. 3. See besides Palace of Pleasure, nov. 40. Belleforest, &c. *The Triumph of Time*, as far as falls within my discovery, is wholly the Author's invention.

Honest Man's Fortune, a Tragi-Comedy. As to the plot of Montague's being preferred by Lamira to be her husband, when he was in adversity, and least expected, the like story is related by Heywood, History of Women, b. 9. p. 641.

Humorous Lieutenant, a Tragi-Comedy, which I have often seen acted with applause. The character of the Humorous Lieutenant refusing to fight after he was cured of his wounds, resembles the story of the soldier belonging to Lucullus, described in the Epistles of Horace, lib. 2. ep. 2. but the very story is related in Ford's Apothegms, p. 30. How near the Poet keeps to the historian I must leave to those that

that will compare the Play with the writers of the lives of Antigonus and Demetrius, the father and the son. See Plutarch's Life of Demetrius, Diodorus, Justin, Appian, &c.

Island Princess, a Tragi-Comedy. This Play about three years ago was revived with Alterations by Mr. Tate, being acted at the Theatre-Royal, printed in 4to. London, 1687, and dedicated to the Right Honourable Henry Lord Walgrave.

King and No King, a Tragi-Comedy, which notwithstanding its errors discovered by Mr. Rymer in his criticisms, has always been acted with applause, and has lately been revived on our present Theatre with so great success, that we may justly say with Horace,

Hæc placuit semel, hæc decies repetita placebit.

Knight of the Burning Pestle, a Comedy. This Play was in vogue some years since, it being revived by the King's House, and a new Prologue (instead of the old one in prose) being spoken by Mrs. Ellen Guin. The bringing the Citizen and his Wife upon the stage, was possibly in imitation of Ben Jonson's Staple of News, who has introduced on the stage Four Gossips, lady-like attired, who remain during the whole action, and criticise upon each scene.

Knight of Malta, a Tragi-Comedy.

Laws of Candy, a Tragi-Comedy.

Little French Lawyer, a Comedy. The plot is borrowed from Gusman, or the Spanish Rogue, part 2. chap. 4. The story of Dinant, Cleremont, and Lamira, being borrowed from Don Lewis de Castro, and Don Roderigo de Montalva. The like story is in other novels; as in Scarron's Novel, called The Fruitless Precaution; and in The Complaisant Companion, 8vo. p. 263, which is copied from the above-mentioned original.

Love's Cure, or The Martial Maid, a Comedy.

Love's Pilgrimage, a Comedy. This I take to be an admirable Comedy. The foundation of it is built on a novel of Miguel de Cervantes, called The Two Damsels. The scene in the first act, between Diego the host of Ossuna, and Lazaro his ostler, is stoln from Ben Jonson's New Inn; which I may rather term borrowed, for that Play miscarrying in the action, I suppose they made use of it with Ben's consent.

Lovers' Progress, a Tragi-Comedy. This Play is built on a French Romance written by Mr. Daudiguier, called Lyfander and Calista.

Loyal Subject, a Tragi-Comedy.

Mad Lover, a Tragi-Comedy. The design of Cleanthe's suborning the Priestess to give a false oracle in favour of her brother

brother Syphax, is borrowed from the story of Mundus and Paulina, described at large by Josephus, lib. 18. cap. 4. This Play Sir Aston Cokain has chiefly commended in his Copy of Verses on Mr. Fletcher's Plays. See the Verses before this Edition; and Cokain's Poems, p. 101.

Maid in the Mill, a Comedy. This Play amongst others, has likewise been revived by the Duke's House. The plot of Antonio, Ismenia, and Aminta, is borrowed from Gerardo, a Romance translated from the Spanish of Don Gonzalo de Cespidés, and Monecés; see the Story of Don Jayme, p. 350. As to the plot of Otrante's seizing Florimel the miller's supposed daughter, and attempting her chastity: 'Tis borrowed from an Italian novel writ by Bandello; a translation of which into French, the Reader may find in *Les Histoires Tragiques*, par M. Belleforest, tom. 1. hist. 12. The same story is related by M. Goulart; see *Les Histoires admirables de nôtre tems*, 8vo. tom. 1. p. 212.

Maid's Tragedy, a Play which has always been acted with great applause at the King's Theatre; and which had still continued on the English stage, had not King Charles the Second, for some particular reasons, forbid its further appearance during his reign. It has since been revived by Mr. Waller, the last act having been wholly altered to please the court. This last act is published in Mr. Waller's Poems, printed in 8vo. London, 1711.

Masque of Grays-Inn Gentlemen, and the Inner-Temple. This Masque was written by Mr. Beaumont alone, and presented before the King and Queen in the Banqueting-House of Whitehall, at the marriage of the Illustrious Frederick and Elizabeth, Prince and Princess Palatine of the Rhine.

Monsieur Thomas, a Comedy, which not long since appeared on the present stage under the name of Trick for Trick.

Nice Valour, or The Passionate Mad-man, a Comedy.

Night-Walker, or The Little Thief, a Comedy, which I have seen acted by the King's Servants, with great applause, both in the city and country.

Noble Gentleman, a Comedy which was lately revived by Mr. Dufsey, under the title of The Fools Preferment, or The Three Dukes of Dunstable.

Philaster, or Love Lies a-Bleeding, a Tragi-Comedy which has always been acted with success, and has been the diversion of the stage, even in these days. This was the first Play that brought these excellent Authors in esteem; and this Play was one of those that were represented at the old Theatre in Lincolns-Inn Fields, when the women acted alone. The Prologue
and

and Epilogue were spoken by Mrs. Marshal, and printed in Covent-Garden Drollery, p. 18. About this time there was a Prologue written on purpose for the women by Mr. Dryden, and is printed in his Miscellany Poems in 8vo. p. 285.

Pilgrim, a Comedy which was revived some years since, and a Prologue spoke, which the Reader may find in Covent-Garden Drollery, p. 12.

Prophetess, a Tragical History, which has lately been revived by Mr. Dryden, under the title of *The Prophetess*, or *The History of Dioclesian*, with Alterations and Additions after the manner of an Opera, represented at the Queen's Theatre, and printed 4to. London, 1690. For the plot consult Eusebius lib. 8. Nicephorus lib. 6. and 7. Vopisc. Car. & Carin. Aur. Victoris Épitome. Eutropius lib. 9. Baronius An. 204. &c. Orosius, l. 7. c. 16. Coeffeteau, l. 20, &c.

Queen of Corinth, a Tragi-Comedy.

Rule a Wife and Have a Wife, a Tragi-Comedy which within these few years has been acted with applause, at the Queen's Theatre in Dorset-Garden.

Scornful Lady, a Comedy acted with good applause, even in these times, at the Theatre in Dorset-Garden. Mr. Dryden has condemned the conclusion of this Play, in reference to the conversion of Moorcraft the usurer; but whether this catastrophe be excusable, I must leave to the critics.

Sea-Voyage, a Comedy lately revived by Mr. Dufey, under the title of *The Commonwealth of Women*. This Play is supposed by Mr. Dryden, (as I have observed) to be copied from Shakespeare's *Tempest*.

- ' The storm which vanish'd on the neighbouring shore,
- ' Was taught by Shakespeare's *Tempest* first to roar;
- ' That innocence and beauty which did smile
- ' In Fletcher, grew on this enchanted isle.'

Spanish Curate, a Comedy frequently revived with general applause. The plot of Don Henrique, Ascanio, Violante, and Jacintha, is borrowed from Gerardo's History of Don John, p. 202. and that of Leandro, Bartolus, Amarantha, and Lopez, from *The Spanish Curate* of the same Author, p. 214, &c.

Thierry and Theodoret, a Tragedy. This Play is accounted by some an excellent old Play; the plot of it is founded on history. See the French Chronicles in the reign of Clotaire the Second. See Fredegarius Scholasticus, Aimoinus Monachus Floriacensis, De Serres, Mezeray, Crispin, &c.

Two Noble Kinsmen, a Tragi-Comedy. This Play was written by Mr. Fletcher and Mr. Shakespeare. The story is taken from Chaucer's *Knight's Tale*, which Mr. Dryden has

has admirably put into modern English; it is the first Poem in his Fables.

Valentinian, a Tragedy revived not long ago by that great wit, the earl of Rochester; acted at the Theatre-Royal, and printed in 4to. 1685, with a Preface concerning the Author and his Writings. For the plot see the writers of those times; as Cassidori Chron. Amm. Marcell. Hist. Evagrius, lib. 2. Procopius, &c.

Wife for a Month, a Tragi-Comedy. This Play is in my poor judgment well worth reviving, and with the alteration of a judicious pen, would be an excellent drama. The character and story of Alphonso, and his brother Frederick's carriage to him much resembles the history of Sancho the Eighth, King of Leon. I leave the Reader to the perusal of his story in Mariana, and Louis de Mayerne Turquet.

Wild-Goose Chase, a Comedy valued by the best judges of poetry.

Wit at Several Weapons, a Comedy which by some is thought very diverting; and possibly was the model on which the characters of the Elder Palatine and Sir Morglay Thwack were built by Sir William D'Avenant, in his Comedy called The Wits.

Wit without Money, a Comedy which I have seen acted at the Old House in Little Lincoln's-Inn Fields with very great applause; the part of Valentine being played by that complete actor Major Mohun deceased. This was the first Play that was acted after the burning the King's House in Drury-Lane; a new Prologue being writ for them by Mr. Dryden, printed in his Miscellany Poems in 8vo. p. 235.

Woman-Hater, a Comedy. This Play was revived by Sir William D'Avenant, and a new Prologue (instead of the old one writ in prose) was spoken, which the Reader may peruse in Sir William's Works in folio, p. 249. This Play was one of those writ by Fletcher alone.

Women Pleas'd, a Tragi-Comedy. The comical parts of this Play throughout between Bartello, Lopez, Isabella, and Claudio, are founded on several of Boccace's Novels: See day 7. nov. 6. and 8. day 8. nov. 8.

Woman's Prize, or *The Tamer Tam'd*, a Comedy, written on the same foundation with Shakespeare's Taming of the Shrew; or which we may better call a Second Part or Counterpart to that admirable comedy. This was writ by Mr. Fletcher's pen likewise.

MR. SEWARD'S PREFACE.

(OCTAVO, 1750.)

THE public at length receives a new edition of the two great Poets, who, with a fate in each case alike unjust, were extolled for near a century after their deaths, as *equals*, *rivals*, nay, *superiors* to the immortal Shakespeare; but in the present age have been depressed beneath the smooth-polished enervate issue of the *modern drama*. And as their fame has been so different with respect to other poets, so has it varied also between themselves. Fletcher was a while supposed unable to rise to any height of eminence, had not Beaumont's stronger arm bore him upwards. Yet no sooner had he lost that aid, and demonstrated that it was delight and love, not necessity, which made him *soar abreast* with his amiable friend; but the still injurious world began to strip the plumes from Beaumont, and to dress Fletcher in the whole fame, leaving to the former nothing but the mere *pruning* of Fletcher's luxuriant wit, the *limæ labor*, the *plummet*, and the *rule*, but neither the *plan*, *materials*, *composition*, or *ornaments*. This is directly asserted in Mr. Cartwright's Commendatory Poem on Fletcher.

Who therefore wisely did submit each birth
To knowing Beaumont ere it did come forth;
Working again until he said, 'twas fit,
And made him the *sobriety* of his wit.

VOL. I.

c

Tho'

xxxiv MR. SEWARD'S PREFACE.

Tho' thus he call'd his *judge* into his *fame*,
And for that aid allow'd him *half the name*, &c.

See Cartwright's Poem below.

Mr. Harris, in his Commendatory Poem, makes Beaumont a mere dead weight hanging on the boughs of Fletcher's palm.

————— When thou didst sit
But as a joint commissioner in wit;
When it had *plummets* hung on to suppress
Its too-luxuriant growing mightiness.
'Till as that tree which scorns to be kept down,
Thou grew'st to govern the whole stage alone.

I believe this extremely injurious to Beaumont; but as the opinion, or something like it, has lived for ages, and is frequent at this day, it is time at length to restore Beaumont to the full rank of fellowship which he possessed when living, and to fix the standard of their respective merits, before we shew the degree in which their united fame ought to be placed on the British Theatre.

Mr. Cartwright and Mr. Harris wrote thirty years after Beaumont's death, and twenty after Fletcher's; and none of the numerous contemporary poems, published with theirs before the first folio edition of our Authors, degrade Beaumont so very low as these. Sir John Berkenhead allows him a full *moiety* of the fame, but seems to think his genius more turned to *grave sublimity* than to sprightliness of imagination.

Fletcher's keen *treble*, and deep Beaumont's *bass*.

Thus has this line of Sir John's been hitherto read and understood, but its authenticity in this light will be disputed when we come to that poem, and the justness of the character at present. We have among the Commendatory Poems, one of Mr. Earle's, wrote immediately after Beaumont's death, and ten years before Fletcher's: He seems to have been an acquaintance

acquaintance as well as contemporary, and his testimony ought to have much more weight than all the traditional opinions of those who wrote thirty years after. He ascribes to Beaumont three first-rate plays; *The Maid's Tragedy*, *Philaster*, and *The King and No King*. The first of these has a *grave sublimity* mingled with more *horror and fury* than are frequently seen among the *gay-spirited* scenes of Fletcher, and probably gave rise to the report of Beaumont's deep base. But there is scarce a more lively-spirited character in all their plays than *Philaster*, and I believe Beaumont aimed at drawing a Hamlet racked with Othello's love and jealousy. *The King and No King* too is extremely spirited in all its characters; Arbaces holds up a mirror to all men of *virtuous principles* but *violent passions*: Hence he is as it were at once *magnanimity* and *pride*, *patience* and *fury*, *gentleness* and *rigor*, *chastity* and *incest*, and is one of the finest mixture of virtues and vices that any poet has drawn, except the Hotspur of Shakespeare, and the *impiger, iracundus, inexorabilis Acer*, of Homer. (For a defence of this character against Mr. Rymer's cavils, see the concluding note on *King and No King*.) Bessus and his two Swordsmen in this play are infinitely the liveliest comic characters of mere bragging cowards which we have in our language; and if they do not upon the whole equal the extensive and inimitable humours of Falstaff and his *companions*, they leave all other characters of the same species, even Shakespeare's own Parolles far behind them.

Our excellent Congreve has consolidated the two Swordsmen to form his Captain Bluff. And be it his honour to have imitated so well, though he is far from reaching the originals. Beaumont lived in the age of *duelling* upon every slight punctilio. Congreve wrote his Bluff in the Flanders war: Times when a braggart was the most ridiculous of all characters; and so far was Beaumont from the supposed

xxxvi MR. SEWARD'S PREFACE.

grave solemn tragic poet only, that *comic humour*, particularly in drawing *cowardise*, seems his peculiar talent. For the spirit of *Bessus paulum mutatus*, changed only so as to give a proper novelty of character, appears again in *The Nice Valour*; or, *Passionate Madman*. The traces of the same hand, so strongly marked in this play, strike a new light upon Beaumont's character. For in a letter to Jonson, printed at the end of *The Nice Valour*, vol. x. he speaks of himself not as a mere *corrector* of others works, but as a Poet of acknowledged eminence, and of *The Nice Valour*, and some other comedy, (which the publisher of the second folio^{*} took for the *Woman-Hater*) as his plays (which must be understood indeed as chiefly his, not excluding Fletcher's assistance.) Now these two plays totally differ in their *manner* from all that Fletcher wrote alone: They consist not of characters from real life, as Fletcher and Shakespeare draw theirs, but of *passions* and *humours personiz'd*, as *cowardise* in *Lapet*, *nice honour* in *Shamont*, the madness of different passions in the *Madman*, the love of *nice eating* in *Lazarillo*, the *hate of women* in *Gonderino*. This is Jonson's *manner*, to whom in the letter quoted above, Beaumont indeed acknowledges that he owed it.

^{*} The publishers of the second folio added several genuine Songs, Prologues, Epilogues, and some lines in particular plays not contained in any former edition, which, by the account given, they perhaps got from either an old actor, or a playhouse-prompter; they say, from a gentleman who had been intimate with both the Authors, they probably were directed by lights received from him to place *The Woman-Hater* directly before *The Nice Valour*, and to make this the other play which Beaumont claims. *The Little French Lawyer*, and *The Knight of the Burning Pestle*, are most certainly two plays which Beaumont had a large share in, for his hand is very visible in the extreme droll character of *The French Lawyer* who runs *duello-mad*; the Prologue talks of the Authors in the plural number, and the strain of high burlesque appears very similar in the two characters of *Lazarillo* in *The Woman-Hater*, and *Ralpho* in *The Burning Pestle*. Beaumont's name too is put first in the title-page of the first quarto of this last play, published a few years after Fletcher's death.

MR. SEWARD'S PREFACE. xxxvii

——— Fate once again
 Bring me to thee, who canst make smooth and plain
 The way of knowledge for me, and then I,
 Who have no good but in thy company,
 Protest it will my greatest comfort be
 T' acknowledge all I have to flow from thee.
 Ben, when these scenes are perfect we'll taste wine :
 I'll drink thy *muse's* health, thou shalt quaff mine.

Does Jonson (who is said constantly to have consulted Beaumont, and to have paid the greatest deference to his judgment) does he, I say, treat him in his answer as a mere *critic*, and *judge* of others works only? No, but as an *eminent poet*, whom he loved with a zeal enough to kindle a love to his memory, as long as poetry delights the understanding, or friendship warms the heart.

How I do love thee, Beaumont, and thy muse,
 That unto me dost such religion use!
 How I do fear myself, that am not worth
 The least indulgent thought thy pen drops forth!

See the remainder of this Poem III. of the Commendatory Verses; see also the *first* of these Poems by Beaumont himself, the close of which will sufficiently confirm both his vigour of *imagination* and *sprightliness* of *humour*. Having thus, we hope, dispersed the cloud that for ages has darkened Beaumont's fame, let it again shine in full lustre *Britanniæ sidus alterum et decus gemellum*. And let us now examine the order and magnitude of this *poetic constellation*, and view the joint characters of Beaumont and Fletcher.

These Authors are in a direct *mean* between Shakespeare and Jonson, they do not reach the *amazing rapidity* and *immortal flights* of the former, but they soar with *more ease* and to *nobler heights* than the latter; they have less of the *os magna sonans*, the *vivida vis animi*, the *noble enthusiasm*, the *muse of fire*, the *terrible graces* of Shakespeare, but they have much more of

xxxviii MR. SEWARD'S PREFACE.

all these than Jonson. On the other hand, in *literature* they much excel the former, and are excelled by the latter; and therefore they are more *regular* in their *plots* and more *correct* in their *sentiments* and *diction* than Shakespeare, but less so than Jonson. Thus far Beaumont and Fletcher are *one*, but as hinted above in this they differ; Beaumont studied and followed Jonson's manner, *personized* the *passions* and drew *Nature* in her *extremes*; Fletcher followed Shakespeare and *Nature* in her *usual dress* (this *distinction* only holds with regard to their *comic works*, for in tragedies they all chiefly paint from *real life*.) Which of these *manners* is most excellent may be difficult to say; the former seems most *striking*, the latter more *pleasing*, the *former* shews *vice* and *folly* in the most ridiculous lights, the *latter* more fully shews each man himself, and unlocks the inmost recesses of the heart.

Great are the names of the various *masters* who followed the one and the other *manner*. Jonson, Beaumont and Moliere list on one side; Terence, Shakespeare and Fletcher on the other.

But to return to our *duumvirate*, between whom two other small differences are observable. Beaumont, as appears by various *testimonies* and chiefly by his own *letter* prefixed to the old folio edition of Chaucer, was a hard student; and for one whom the world lost before he was *thirty*, had a surprising compass of literature: Fletcher was a *polite* rather than a *deep scholar*, and conversed with *men* at least as much as with *books*. Hence the *gay sprightliness* and natural *ease* of his young gentleman are allowed to be inimitable; in these he has been preferred by judges of candour even to Shakespeare himself. If Beaumont does not equal him in this, yet being by his *fortune* conversant also in high life (the son of a judge, as the other of a bishop) he is in this too *alter ab illo*, a good *second*, and almost a *second self*, as Philaster, Amintor, Bacurius in the three first plays,

MR. SEWARD'S PREFACE. xxxix

plays, Count Valore, Oriana, Clerimont, Valentine, and others evidently shew.

This small difference observed, another appears by no means similar to it: Beaumont, we said, chiefly studied *books* and Jonson; Fletcher, *Nature* and Shakespeare, yet so far was the *first* from following his *friend* and *master* in his frequent close and almost servile imitations of the ancient *classics*, that he seems to have had a much greater confidence in the *fertility* and *richness* of his own imagination than even Fletcher himself: The *latter* in his *masterpiece*, The Faithful Shepherdess, frequently imitates Theocritus and Virgil; in Rollo has taken whole scenes from Seneca, and almost whole acts from Lucan in The False One. I do not blame him for this, his imitations have not the *stiffness*, which sometimes appears (though not often) in Jonson, but breathe the free and full air of *originals*; and accordingly Rollo² and The False One are two of Fletcher's first-rate plays. But Beaumont, I believe, never condescended to *translate* and rarely to *imitate*; however largely he was supplied with classic streams, from his own *urn* all flows *pure* and *untintured*. Here the two friends change places: Beaumont *rises* in merit towards Shakespeare, and Fletcher descends towards Jonson.

Having thus seen the features of these *twins* of poetry greatly *resembling* yet still distinct from each other, let us conclude that all reports which separate and lessen the fame of either of them are ill-grounded and false, that they were as Sir John Berkenhead calls them, *two full congenial souls*, or, as either Fletcher himself, or his still greater *colleague*

² Rollo is in the first edition in quarto ascribed to Fletcher alone, The False One is one of those plays that is more dubious as to its Authors. The Prologue speaks of them in the plural number and 'tis probable that Beaumont assisted in the latter part of it, but I believe not much in the two first acts, as these are so very much taken from Lucan, and the observation of Beaumont's not indulging himself in such liberties holds good in all the plays in which he is known to have had the largest share.

xl MR. SEWARD'S PREFACE.

Shakespeare expresses it in their Two Noble Kinsmen. Vol. x. p. 32.

They were an endless *mine* to one another ;
They were each others *wife*, ever begetting
New births of wit.

They were both extremely remarkable for their *ready flow* of wit in *conversation* as well as *composition*, and *gentlemen* that remembered them, says Shirley, declare that on every occasion they *talked a comedy*. As therefore they were so *twinned* in *genius*, *worth* and *wit*, so *lovely and pleasant* in their *lives*, after death, let not their fame be ever again *divided*.

And now, Reader, when thou art fired into rage or melted into pity by their *tragic scenes*, charmed with the genteel elegance or bursting into laughter at their *comic humour*, canst thou not drop the intervening ages, steal into Jonson, Beaumont and Fletcher's *club-room* at the Mermaid, on a night when Shakespeare, Donne and others visited them, and there join in society with as great *wits* as ever this *nation*, or perhaps ever Greece or Rome could at one time boast? where animated each by the other's presence, they even excelled themselves ;

————— For *wit* is like a *rest*,
Held up at *tennis*, which men do the best
With the best gamesters. What things have we seen
Done at the Mermaid ! heard words that have been
So nimble and so full of subtle flame,
As if that every one from whence they came
Had meant to put his whole *wit* in a *jest*,
And had resolv'd to live a fool the rest
Of his dull life ; then when there hath been thrown
Wit able enough to justify the *town*
For three days past ; *wit* that might warrant be
For the whole city to talk foolishly
'Till that were cancell'd ; and when that was gone
We left an air behind us, which alone
Was able to make the two next companies
Right witty ; tho' but downright *fools*, mere *wife*.

Beaumont's Letter to Jonson, vol. x.
Hitherto

MR. SEWARD'S PREFACE. xli

Hitherto the Reader has received only the *portraits* of our Authors without any proof of the similitude and justice of the *draught*; nor can we hope that it will appear just from a mere cursory view of the originals. Many people read plays chiefly for the sake of the *plot*, hurrying still on for that discovery. The happy contrivance of surprising but natural incidents is certainly a very great beauty in the *drama*, and little writers have often made their advantages of it; they could contrive *incidents* to embarrass and perplex the *plot*, and by that alone have succeeded and pleased, without perhaps a single line of *nervous poetry*, a single *sentiment* worthy of memory, without a *passion* worked up with natural vigour, or a character of any distinguished marks. The best *poets* have rarely made this *dramatic mechanism* their point. Neither Sophocles, Euripides, Terence, Shakespeare, Beaumont, Fletcher or Jonson, are at all remarkable for forming a *labyrinth* of *incidents* and entangling their readers in a *pleasing perplexity*: Our late dramatic poets learnt this from the French, and they from *romance-writers* and *novelists*. We could almost wish the readers of Beaumont and Fletcher to drop the expectation of the event of each story, to attend with more care to the beauty and energy of the *sentiments*, *diction*, *passions* and *characters*. Every good author pleases more, the more he is examined; (hence perhaps that *partiality* of *editors* to their *own authors*; by a more intimate acquaintance, they discover more of their beauties than they do of others) especially when the *style* and *manner* are quite *old-fashioned*, and the beauties hid under the uncouthness of the dress. The *taste* and *fashion* of poetry varies in every age, and though our old dramatic writers are as preferable to the modern as Vandyke and Rubens to our modern painters, yet most eyes must be accustomed to their *manner* before they can discern their *excellencies*. Thus the very best plays of Shakespeare were forced

to

xlili MR. SEWARD'S PREFACE.

to be dressed *fashionably* by the *poetic taylor*s of the late ages before they could be admitted upon the stage, and a very few years since his *comedies* in general were under the highest contempt. Few very few durst speak of them with any sort of regard, till the many excellent *criticisms* upon that author made people study him, and some excellent *actors* revived these comedies, which completely opened mens eyes; and it is now become as *fashionable* to admire as it had been to decry them.

Shakespeare therefore even in his *second-best manner* being now generally admired, we shall endeavour to prove that his *second-rate* and our Author's *first-rate beauties* are so near upon a par that they are scarce distinguishable. A Preface allows not room for sufficient proofs of this, but we will produce at least some parallels of poetic *diction* and *sentiments*, and refer to some of the *characters* and *passions*.

The instances shall be divided into three classes: The first of passages where our Authors fall short in comparison of Shakespeare; the second of such as are not easily discerned from him; the third of those where Beaumont and Fletcher have the advantage.

In The Maid's Tragedy there is a similar passage to one of Shakespeare, the comparison of which alone will be no bad scale to judge of their different excellencies. Melantius the general thus speaks of his friend Amintor.

His worth is great, valiant he is and temperate,
And one that never thinks his life his own
If his friend need it: When he was a boy
As oft as I returned (as, without boast
I brought home conquest) he would gaze upon me,
And view me round, to find in what one limb
The virtue lay to do those things he heard;
Then would he wish to see my sword, and feel
The quickness of the edge, and in his hand
Weigh it.—He oft would make me smile at this;
His youth did promise much, and his ripe years
Will see it all performed.

Vol. i. page 7.

A youth

MR. SEWARD'S PREFACE. xliii

A youth gazing on every limb of the victorious chief, then begging his sword, feeling its edge, and poising it in his arm, are attitudes nobly expressive of the inward ardor and ecstasy of soul: But what is most observable is,

————— And in his hand
Weigh it——He oft, &c.

By this beautiful pause or break, the *action* and *picture* continue in view, and the Poet, like Homer, is *eloquent in silence*. It is a species of beauty that shews an intimacy with that *father of poetry*, in whom it occurs extremely often³. Milton has an exceeding fine one in the description of his Lazar-House.

————— Despair
Tended the sick, busiest from couch to couch,
And over them triumphant Death his dart
Shook,—but delay'd to strike, &c.
Paradise Lost, book xi. line 489.

As Shakespeare did not study *versification* so much as those poets who were conversant in Homer and Virgil, I don't remember in him any striking instance of this species of beauty. But he even wanted it not, his *sentiments* are so amazingly striking, that they pierce the heart at once; and *diction* and *numbers*, which are the *beauty* and *nerves* adorning and invigorating the *thoughts* of other poets, to him are but like the *bodies of angels*, *azure vehicles*, through which the whole *soul* shines transparent. Of this take the following instance. The old Belarius in Cymbeline is describing the in-born royalty of the two *princes* whom he had bred up as peasants in his cave.

————— This Paladour, (whom
The king his father call'd Guiderius) Jove!

³ See two noble instances at l. 141. of the 13th Book of the Iliad, and in the application of the same simile a few lines below.

When

xliv MR. SEWARD'S PREFACE.

When on my three-foot stool I sit, and tell
The warlike feats I've done, his spirits fly out
Into my story: Say thus mine enemy fell,
And thus I set my foot on's neck—even then
The princely blood flows in his cheek, he sweats,
Strains his young nerves, and puts himself in posture
That acts my words.—

Cymbeline, act iii. scene iii.

Much the same difference as between these two passages occurs likewise in the following pictures of *rural melancholy*, the first of *innocence forlorn*, the second of *philosophic tenderness*.

————— I have a boy
Sent by the gods I hope to this intent,
Not yet seen in the court. Hunting the buck
I found him sitting by a fountain-side,
Of which he borrow'd some to quench his thirst,
And paid the nymph again as much in tears;
A garland lay by him, made by himself
Of many several flowers, bred in the bay,
Stuck in that mystic order that the rareness
Delighted me: But ever when he turn'd
His tender eyes upon them, he would weep,
As if he meant to make them grow again.
Seeing such pretty helpless innocence
Dwell in his face, I ask'd him all his story;
He told me, that his parents gentle died,
Leaving him to the mercy of the fields,
Which gave him roots, and of the crystal springs
Which did not stop their courses; and the sun
Which still he thank'd him, yielded him his light.
Then took he up his garland, and did shew,
What every flower, as country people hold,
Did signify; and how all, order'd thus,
Exprest his grief; and to my thoughts did read
The prettiest lecture of his country art
That could be wish'd, so that methought I could
Have studied it.— *Philaster, vol. i. p. 120.*

Jaques in *As You Like It* is *moralizing* upon the fate of the deer goared by the hunters in their native confines.

The

The melancholy Jaques grieves at that,

To day my lord of Amiens and myself
Did steal behind him, as he lay along
Under an oak, whose antique root peeps out
Upon the brook that brawls along this wood;
To the which place a poor sequestered stag,
That from the hunter's aim had ta'en a hurt,
Did come to languish; and indeed, my lord,
The wretched animal heav'd forth such groans,
That their discharge did stretch his leathern coat
Almost to bursting; and the big round tears
Cours'd one another down his innocent nose
In piteous chase; and thus the hairy fool
Much marked of the melancholy Jaques,
Stood on th' extremest verge of the swift brook,
Augmenting it with tears.

Duke. But what said Jaques?

Did he not moralize this spectacle?

Lord. Oh, yes, into a thousand similes.
First, for his weeping in the needful stream;
Poor deer, quoth he, thou mak'st a testament
As worldlings do, giving thy sum of more
To that which had too much; then being alone
Left and abandon'd of his velvet friends:
'Tis right, quoth he, thus misery doth part
The flux of company: Anon a careless herd,
Full of the pasture, jumps along by him,
And never stays to greet him: Ay, quoth Jaques,
Sweep on, ye fat and greasy citizens,
'Tis just the fashion, &c.

As You Like It, act ii. scene i.

Shakespeare is certainly much preferable, but 'tis only as a Raphael is preferable to a Guido—Philaster alone would afford numbers of passages similar to some of Shakespeare's, upon which the same observation will hold true, they are not equal to his very *best manner*, but they approach near it. As I have mentioned Jonson being in poetic energy about the same distance below our Authors, as Shakespeare is above them, I shall quote three passages which seem to me in this very *scale*. Jonson translates *verbatim*
from

xlvi MR. SEWARD'S PREFACE.

from Salust great part of Catiline's speech to his soldiers, but adds in the close :

Methinks, I see Death and the Furies waiting
What we will do ; and all the Heaven at leisure
For the great spectacle. Draw then your swords :
And if our Destiny envy our Virtue
The honour of the day, yet let us care
To sell ourselves at such a price, as may
Undo the world to buy us ; and make Fate
While she tempts ours, fear for her own estate.

Catiline, act v.

Jonson has here added greatly to the *ferocity*, *terror* and *despair* of Catiline's speech, but it is consonant to his character both in his life and death. The image in the three first lines is extremely noble, and may be said to emulate though not quite to reach the poetic extacy of the following passage in Bonduca. Suetonius the Roman general having his small army hemmed round by multitudes, tells his soldiers that the number of the foes,

Is but to stick more honour on your actions,
Load you with virtuous names, and to your memories
Tie never-dying Time and Fortune constant.
Go on in full assurance, draw your swords
As daring and as confident as Justice.
'The Gods of Rome fight for ye ; loud Fame calls ye
Pitch'd on the tops of Apennine, and blows
To all the under world, all nations, seas,
And unfrequented desarts where the snow dwells ;
Wakens the ruin'd monuments, and there
Informs again the dead bones with your virtues*.

The four first lines are extremely nervous, but the image which appears to excel the noble one of Jonson above, is Fame pitch'd on mount Apennine (whose top is supposed viewless from its stupendous

[* Is but to stick, &c.—*Mr. Seward has in this passage amended the punctuation, which in the former copies materially injured the sense. The Reader is desired to consult the lection of the present Edition, and the Note, vol. vi. p. 323-4.*]

height)

MR. SEWARD'S PREFACE. xlvii

height) and from thence founding their *virtues* so loud that the dead awake and are re-animated to hear them. The close of the sentiment is extremely in the spirit of Shakespeare and Milton, the former says of a storm——

That with the hurly Death itself awakes ;

Milton in *Comus*, describing a lady's singing, says ;

He took in sounds that might create a soul
Under the ribs of Death.

To return to Shakespeare—With him we must soar far above the *topless* Apennine, and there behold an image much nobler than our Author's Fame.

For now sits *Expectation* in the air ⁴,
And hides a sword from hilts unto the point
With crowns imperial.——

Chorus in Henry V. act ii. scene i.

As we shall now go on to the second class, and quote passages where the hand of Shakespeare is not so easily discerned from our Author's, if the reader happens to remember neither, it may be entertaining to be left to guess at the different hands. Thus each of them describing a beautiful boy.

————— Dear lad, believe it,
For they shall yet belie thy happy years

⁴ *For now sits Expectation, &c.*] See Mr. Warburton's just observation on the beauty of the imagery here. But, as *similar beauties* do not always strike the same taste alike, another passage in this play that seems to deserve the same admiration is rejected by this great man as not Shakespeare's. The French King speaking of the Black Prince's victory at Cressy, says,

' While that his *mountain Sire*, on *mountain* standing,

' Up in the air crown'd with the golden sun,

' Saw his heroic *seed*, and smil'd to see him

' Mangle the work of Nature.' Henry V. act ii. scene 4.

I have marked the line rejected, " and which seems to breathe the full soul of Shakespeare. The reader will find a defence and explanation of the whole passage at vol. x. p. 173. of this edition.

That

xlviîi MR. SEWARD'S PREFACE.

That say thou art a man! Diana's lip
Is not more smooth and rubious; thy small pipe
Is as the maidens organ, shrill, and sound,
And all is semblative a woman's part.

The other is

Alas! what kind of grief can thy years know?

Thy brows and cheeks are smooth as waters be
When no breath troubles them: Believe me, boy,
Care seeks out wrinkled brows and hollow eyes,
And builds himself caves to abide in them.

The one is in *Philaster*, page 131. The other in *Twelfth-Night*, act i. scene 4.—In the same page of *Philaster*, there is a description of *love*, which the reader, if he pleases, may compare to two descriptions of *love* in *As You Like It*—both by *Silvia*, but neither preferable to our Author's. I cannot quote half of those which occur in the play of *Philaster* alone, which bear the same degree of likeness as the last quoted passages, *i. e.* where the hands are scarce to be distinguished; but I will give one parallel more from thence, because the passages are both extremely fine, though the hands from one single expression of Shakespeare's are more visible, a prince deprived of his throne and betrayed as he thought in *love*, thus mourns his melancholy state.

Oh! that I had been nourish'd in these woods
With milk of goats and acorns, and not known
The *right of crowns*, nor the dissembling trains
Of *womens looks*; but dig'd myself a cave,
Where I^s, my fire, my cattle and my bed,
Might have been shut together in one shed;
And then had taken me some mountain girl,
Beaten with winds, chaste as the harden'd rocks
Whereon she dwells; that might have strew'd my bed
With leaves and reeds, and with the skins of beasts
Our neighbours; and have borne at her big breasts
My large coarse issue!

^s Juvenal, Sat. vi.

MR. SEWARD'S PREFACE. xlix

In the other, a king thus compares the state of royalty to that of a private life.

No not all these, thrice-gorgeous Ceremony,
Not all these laid in bed majestical,
Can sleep so soundly as the wretched slave;
Who with a body fill'd, and vacant mind,
Gets him to rest, cramm'd with distressful bread;
Never sees horrid Night, the child of hell:
But, like a lackey *, from the rise to set,
Sweats in the eye of Phœbus, and all night
Sleeps in Elysium; next day, after dawn,
Doth rise and help Hyperion to his horse;
And follows so the ever-running year
With profitable labour to his grave.
And (but for ceremony) such a wretch
Winding up days with toil, and nights with sleep,
Hath the forehand and 'vantage of a king.

The instances of these two classes, particularly the former, where the exquisite beauties of Shakespeare are not quite reach'd, are most numerous; and though the design of the notes in this edition was in general only to settle the text, yet in three of the plays, *The Faithful Shepherdess*, *The False One*, and *The Two Noble Kinsmen*, that design is much enlarged, for reasons there assigned. And if the Reader pleases to turn to these, he will find several parallels between Fletcher, Shakespeare, and Milton, that are most of them to be ranged under one of these classes: But there is a third class of those instances where our Authors have been so happy as to soar above Shakespeare, and even where Shakespeare is not greatly beneath himself.

[* But like a lackey, &c.—Seward proposes altering A to HIS; for a lackey being 'the idlest of all servants,' 'the simile is absurd;' but HIS lackey ' (i. e. the lackey of Phœbus) ' means 'one who follows 'the motions of the sun as constant as a lackey does those of his 'master.' Is not this a distinction without a difference? or does Apollo keep but one lackey?—In supporting the variation, he makes some remarks (which we think uninteresting) on remote antecedents, and digresses on the subject of Richard mentioning the formal Vice, Iniquity, with which every Reader of Shakespeare's Commentators must be already surfeited.]

xlviîi MR. SEWARD'S PREFACE.

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MR. SEWARD'S PREFACE. xlix

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1 MR. SEWARD'S PREFACE.

In *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, the forlorn Julia, disguised as a boy, being asked of Silvia how tall Julia was, answers :

About my stature: For at Pentecost,
When all our pageants of delight were play'd,
Our youth got me to play the woman's part,
And I was trimm'd in madam Julia's gown.
And at that time I made her weep a-good,
For I did play a lamentable part.
Madam, 'twas Ariadne passioning
For Theseus' perjury and unjust flight;
Which I so lively acted with my tears,
That my poor mistress, moved therewithal,
Wept bitterly, and would I might be dead,
If I in thought felt not her very sorrow⁶.

Act iv. scene the last.

There is something extremely tender, innocent, and delicate, in these lines of Shakespeare, but our Authors are far beyond this praise in their allusion to the same story. In the *Maid's Tragedy*, Aspatia in like manner forsaken by her lover, finds her maid Antiphila working a picture of Ariadne; and after several fine reflexions upon Theseus, says;

But where's the lady?

Ant. There, madam.

Asp. Fy, you have miss'd it here, Antiphila,
These colours are not dull and pale enough,

⁶ *If I in thought felt not her very sorrow.*] Whoever fully catches the tender melancholy of these lines, will know that Julia under such distress could not feign a case so exactly the parallel of her own, without such emotions as would speak themselves in every feature, and flow in tears from her eyes. She adds the last line therefore to take off the suspicion of her being the real Julia; But would she only say, that she *felt* Julia's sorrow formerly, when she saw her weep? No! She must excuse the present perturbation of her countenance, and the true reading most probably is:

‘ And would I might be dead,

‘ If I in thought feel not her very sorrow.

This better agrees with the double meaning intended, and with Silvia's reply, who says,

‘ She is beholden to thee, gentle youth.

‘ I weep myself to think upon thy words.’

[*The text is surely unexceptionable, and the alteration a needless refinement.*]

To

To shew a soul so full of misery
 As this sad lady's was; do it by me;
 Do it again by me the lost Aspatia,
 And you shall find all true.—Put me' on th' wild island 7.

7 *Put me' on th' wild island.*] I have given these lines as I think we ought to read them, but very different from what are printed in this edition. Four of the old *quarto's*, the *folio*, and the late *octavo* read,

*And you shall find all true but the wild island.
 I stand upon the sea-beach now, and think, &c.*

I observed to Mr. Theobald, that here was a glaring *poetical contradiction*. She says, you'll find all true except the *wild island*, and instantly she is upon the island.

I stand upon the sea beach now, &c.

The wild island therefore in her imagination is as true as the rest. The enthusiasm is noble, but wants a proper introduction, which the change only of a *b* for a *p* will tolerably give.

*And you shall find all true.—Put the wild island;
 I stand, &c.*

But as there are numberless instances of many words, and particularly monosyllables, being dropt from the text (of which there is one in the same page with these lines, and another in the same play, vol. i. p. 59. very remarkable) I suppose this to have happened here; for by reading *Put me on the wild island*;—*I stand upon, &c.* how nobly does she start as it were from *fancy* to *reality*, from the *picture* into the *life*? *Me' on th'* by elisions common to all our old poets, may become one syllable in the pronunciation; but if we speak them full, and make a twelve syllable verse, it will have a hundred fellows in our Authors, and should have had one but three lines below the passage here quoted.

*Make a dull silence, till you feel a sudden sadness
 Give us new souls.*

As Aspatia's grief had been of long continuance, *sudden* was evidently corrupt, and I therefore proposed to Mr. Theobald to read *fullen*, which is an epithet perfectly proper and extremely nervous; but as he could by no means be persuaded to mention the former conjecture, and the only objection he urged was, that it made a twelve-syllable verse, he would not let one of twelve syllables remain so near it; and therefore without authority of any prior edition, discarded the epithet intirely from the text, and adopted the reading of the first quarto in the former passage.

Suppose *I stand upon the sea-beach now, &c.*

As this is much the most unpoetical of all the readings, and the first introducers of the text in the intermediate editions claim their corrections from the original manuscript, I can by no means approve the choice he has made.

[We cannot perceive any necessity for these variations; the oldest quarto is therefore followed in this Edition.—But is certainly preferable]

lii MR. SEWARD'S PREFACE.

I stand upon the sea-beach now, and think
 Mine arms thus, and mine hair blown by the wind,
 Wild as that defart, and let all about me
 Be teachers of my story; do my face
 (If thou hadst ever feeling of a sorrow)
 Thus, thus, Antiphila; strive to make me look
 Like Sorrow's monument; and the trees about me
 Let them be dry and leafless; let the rocks
 Groan with continual furies, and behind me
 Make all a desolation; see, see, wench,
 A miserable *life* of this poor picture. *Vol. i. p. 38.*

Whoever has seen either the original or print of Guido's Bacchus and Ariadne will have the best *comment* on these lines. In both are the arms extended, the hair blown by the wind, the barren roughness of the rocks, the broken trunks of leafless trees, and in both she looks like *Sorrow's monument*. So that exactly *ut pictura poesis*; and hard it is to say, whether our Authors or Guido *painted best*. I shall refer to the note below for a farther comment, and proceed to another instance of superior excellence in our Authors, and where they have more evidently built on Shakespeare's foundation. At the latter-end of King John the King has received a *burning poison*; and being asked,

How fares your majesty?

K. John. Poison'd, ill fare! dead, forsook, cast off;
 And none of you will bid the Winter come,
 To trust his icy fingers in my maw;
 Nor let my kingdom's rivers take their course
 Thro' my burnt bosom; nor entreat the North
 To make his bleak winds kiss my parched lips,
 And comfort me with cold.—I do not ask you much,
 I beg cold comfort.

The first and last lines are to be ranged among
 able to put, *with Seward's elisions; and suppose, at the beginning of the line, seems much better than and think at the end, as it continues the dialogue more easily. As to sudden, Theobald's silent omission is very faulty; the expression is dark, but we cannot find that sudden at all assists it.]*

the

MR. SEWARD'S PREFACE. liii

the *faults* that so much disgrace Shakespeare, which he committed to please the corrupt taste of the age he liv'd in, but to which Beaumont and Fletcher's learning and fortune made them superior. The intermediate lines are extremely beautiful, and marked as such by the late great editor, but yet are much improved in two plays of our Authors, the first in *Valentinian*, where the Emperor poisoned in the same manner, dies with more *violence, fury, and horror*, than King John; but the passage which I shall quote is from *A Wife for a Month*, a play which does not upon the whole equal the poetic sublimity of *Valentinian*, though it rather excels it in the poisoning scene. The prince Alphonso, who had been long in a phrenzy of melancholy, is poisoned with a hot fiery potion; under the agonies of which he thus raves,

Give me more air, more air, air; blow, blow, blow,
Open thou Eastern gate, and blow upon me;
Distil thy cold dews, oh, thou icy moon,
And rivers run thro' my afflicted spirit.
I am all fire, fire, fire; the raging Dog-star
Reigns in my blood; oh, which way shall I turn me?
Ætna and all her flames burn in my head.
Fling me into the ocean or I perish.
Dig, dig, dig, dig, until the springs fly up,
The cold, cold springs, that I may leap into them,
And bathe my scorch'd limbs in their *purling pleasures*;
Or shoot me into the higher region,
Where treasures of delicious snow are nourish'd,
And banquets of sweet hail.

Rug. Hold him fast, friar,
Oh, how he burns!

Alph. What, will ye sacrifice me?
Upon the altar lay my willing body,
And pile your wood up, fling your holy incense;
And, as I turn me, you shall see all flame,
Consuming flame. Stand off me, or you're ashes.

* * * * *

Mart. To bed, good Sir.

Alph. My bed will burn about me;

Like Phaeton, in all-consuming flashes
 Am I enclos'd ; let me fly, let me fly, give room ;
 'Twixt the cold bears, far from the raging lion,
 Lies my safe way ; oh, for a cake of ice now
 To clap unto my heart to comfort me.
 Decrepit Winter hang upon my shoulders,
 And let me wear thy frozen isicles,
 Like jewels round about my head, to cool me.
 My eyes burn out and sink into their sockets,
 And my infected brain like brimstone boils ;
 I live in hell and several furies vex me.
 Oh, carry me where never sun e'er shew'd yet
 A face of comfort, where the earth is crystal,
 Never to be dissolv'd, where nought inhabits
 But night and cold, and nipping frosts and winds,
 That cut the stubborn rocks, and make them shiver ;
 Set me there, friends.——

Every reader of taste will see how superior this is to the quotation from Shakespeare. The images are vastly more numerous, more judicious, more nervous, and the passions are wrought up to the highest pitch ; so that it may be fairly preferred to every thing of its kind in all Shakespeare, except one scene of Lear's madness, which it would emulate too, could we see such an excellent comment on it as Lear receives from his representative on the stage.

As these last quotations are not only specimens of *diction* and *sentiment*, but of *passions* inflamed into *poetic enthusiasm* ; I shall refer the reader to some other parallels of *passions* and *characters* that greatly resemble, and sometimes rival the spirit and sublimity of Shakespeare. He will please therefore to compare the *phrenzy* and the whole sweet *character* of the Jailor's Daughter in the Two Noble Kinsmen to Ophelia in Hamlet, where the *copy* is so extremely like the *original* that either the same *hand* drew both, or Fletcher's is not to be distinguished from Shakespeare's :—To compare the deaths of Pontius and Æcius in Valentinian with that of Cassius, Brutus and their friends in Julius Cæsar, and if he *admires* a little less, he will *weep* much more ; it more excels
 in

in the *pathetic* than it falls short in *dignity*:—To compare the *character* and *passions* of Cleopatra in the False One, to those of Shakespeare's Cleopatra:—To compare the pious deprecations and grief-mingled fury of Edith (upon the murder of her father by Rollo, in the Bloody Brother) to the *grief* and *fury* of Macduff, upon his wife and children's murder. Our Authors will not, we hope, be found *light* in the *scale* in any of these instances, though their *beam* in general fly some little *upwards*, it will sometimes at least tug hard for a *poise*. But be it allowed, that as in *diction* and *sentiment*, so in *characters* and *passions*, Shakespeare in general excels, yet here too a very strong instance occurs of preeminence in our Authors. It is Juliana in the Double Marriage, who, through her whole *character*, in conjugal fidelity, unshaken constancy and amiable tenderness, even more than rivals the Portia of Shakespeare, and her *death* not only far excels the others, but even the most *pathetic deaths* that Shakespeare has any where described or exhibited; King Lear's with Cordelia dead in his arms, most resembles, but by no means equals it; the grief, in this case, only pushes an *old man* into the *grave*, already *half buried* with age and misfortunes; in the other, it is such *consummate horror*, as in a few minutes *freezes youth and beauty* into a *monumental statue*. The last parallel I shall mention, shall give Shakespeare his due preference, where our Authors very visibly emulate but cannot reach him. It is the quarrel of Amintor and Melantius in the Maid's Tragedy compared to that of Brutus and Cassius. The beginning of the quarrel is upon as just grounds, and the passions are wrought up to as great violence, but there is not such extreme *dignity* of character, nor such noble sentiments of *morality* in either Amintor or Melantius as in Brutus⁸.

⁸ One *key* to Amintor's heroism and distress, will, I believe, solve all the objections that have been raised to this scene; which will vanish at once by only an *occasional conformity* to our Authors *ethical* and

lvi MR. SEWARD'S PREFACE.

Having thus given, we hope, pretty strong proofs of our Authors excellence in the *sublime*, and shewn how near they approach in splendor to the *great sun* of the British Theatre; let us now just touch on their *comedies* and draw one parallel of a very different kind. Horace makes a doubt whether *comedy* should be called *poetry* or not, *i. e.* whether the comedies of Terence, Plautus, Menander, &c. should be esteemed such, for in its own nature there is a *comic poetic diction* as well as a *tragic* one; a diction which Horace himself was a great master of, though it had not then been used in the *drama*; for even the sublimest sentiments of Terence, when his *comedy raises its voice* to the greatest dignity, are still not cloathed in *poetic diction*. The British *drama* which before Jonson received only some little improvement from the *models* of Greece and Rome, but sprung chiefly from their own *moralities*, and *religious farces*; and had a birth extremely similar to what the Grecian *drama* originally sprung from; differed in its growth from the Greeks chiefly in two particulars. The latter separated the *solemn* parts of their religious shews from the *satiric farcical* parts of them, and so formed the distinct species of *tragedy* and *comedy*; the Britons

political principles. They held *passive obedience* and *non-resistance to princes* an indispensable duty; a doctrine which Queen Elizabeth's goodness made her subjects fond of imbibing, and which her *successor's* *king-craft* with far different views, carried to its highest pitch. In this period, our Authors wrote, and we may as well quarrel with Tasso for Popery, or with Homer and Virgil for Heathenism, as with our Authors for this principle. It is therefore the violent shocks of the highest provocations struggling with what Amintor thought his eternal duty; of *nature* rebelling against *principle* (as a famous Partisan for this doctrine in Queen Ann's reign expressed it, when he happened not to be in the ministry) which drive the *heroic youth* into that *phrenzy*, which makes him challenge his dearest friend for espousing too revengefully his own quarrel against the *sacred majesty* of the most *abandonedly wicked king*. The same *key* is necessary to the heroism of Æcius, Aubrey, Archas, and many others of our Author's characters; in all which the reader will perhaps think, there is something unnaturally absurd; but the absurdity is wholly chargeable on the doctrine not on the Poets.

were

MR. SEWARD'S PREFACE. lvii

were not so happy, but suffered them to continue united, even in hands of as great or greater poets than Sophocles and Euripides. But they had far better success in the second instance. The Greeks appropriated the spirit and nerves of poetry to *tragedy* only, and though they did not wholly deprive the *comedy* of metre, they left it not the shadow of *poetic diction* and *sentiment*;

*Idcirco quidam, comœdia necne poema
Esset, quæstivè: Quod acer spiritus ac vis
Nec verbis nec rebus inest.*

The Britons not only retained metre in their comedies, but also all the *acer spiritus*, all the strength and nerves of poetry, which was in a good measure owing to the happiness of our blank verse, which at the same time that it is capable of the highest *sublimity*, the most extensive and noblest *harmony* of the *tragic* and *epic*; yet when used familiarly is so near the *sermo pedestris*, so easy and natural as to be well adapted even to the drollest *comic dialogue*. The French common metre is the very reverse of this; it is much too stiff and formal either for *tragedy* or *comedy*, unable to rise with proper dignity to the sublimity of the one, or to descend with ease to the jocular familiarity of the other. Besides the cramp of rhyme every line is cut asunder by so strong a *cæsure*, that in English we should divide it into the *three-foot stanza*, as

When Fanny blooming fair
First caught my ravish'd sight,
Struck with her shape and air
I felt a strange delight*.

Take one of the rhimes from these, and write them in two lines, they are exactly the same with the French *tragic* and *epic* metre.

When Fanny blooming fair, first caught my ravish'd sight,
Struck with her air and shape, I felt a strange delight.

[* This is the first stanza of a song by Lord Chesterfield. R.]

In

lviii MR. SEWARD'S PREFACE.

In a language where this is their sublimest measure, no wonder that their greatest poet should write his *Telemaque* an Epic Poem in prose. Every one must know that the *genteel parts of comedy*, descriptions of polite life, moral sentences, paternal fondness, filial duty, generous friendship, and particularly the delicacy and tenderness of lovers' sentiments are equally proper to poetry in *comedy* as *tragedy*; in these things there is no sort of real difference between the two, and what the Greeks and Latins formed had no foundation in nature; our old poets therefore made no such difference, and their comedies in this respect vastly excel the Latins and Greeks. Jonson who reformed many faults of our *drama*, and followed the plans of Greece and Rome very closely in most instances, yet preserved the poetic fire and diction of comedy as a great excellence. How many instances of inimitable *poetic beauties* might one produce from Shakespeare's *comedies*? Not so many yet extremely numerous are those of our Authors, and such as in an ancient classic would be thought *beauties* of the first magnitude. These lie before me in such variety, that I scarce know where to fix. But I'll confine myself chiefly to *moral sentiments*. In the Elder Brother, Charles the scholar thus speaks of the joys of *literature*; being asked by his father——

—————Nor will you
Take care of my estate?
Char. But in my wishes;
For know, Sir, that the wings on which my soul
Is mounted, have long since borne her too high
To stoop to any prey that soars not upwards.
Sordid and dunghill minds, compos'd of earth,
In that gross element fix all their happiness;
But purer spirits, purg'd and refin'd, shake off
That clog of human frailty. Give me leave
T' enjoy myself; that place that does contain
My *books*, the best companions, is to me
A glorious court, where hourly I converse
With the old *sages* and *philosophers*;

And

MR. SEWARD'S PREFACE. lix

And sometimes, for variety, I confer
With *kings* and *emperors*, and weigh their counsels;
Calling their *vic'tories*, if unjustly got,
Unto a strict account, and, in my fancy,
Deface their ill-plac'd *statues*. *Vol. ii. p. 123.*

In Monsieur Thomas, a youth in love with his
friend's intended wife, after resisting the greatest
temptations of *passion*, is thus encouraged by the
young *lady* to persevere in his integrity.

Francis. Whither do you drive me?

Cellide. Back to your *honesty*, make that good ever,
'Tis like a strong-built *castle* seated high,
That draws on all *ambitions*; still repair it,
Still fortify it: There are thousand *foes*,
Beside the tyrant *beauty* will assail it.
Look to your *centinels* that watch it hourly,
Your *eyes*, let them not wander,——

——— Keep your *ears*,
The two main *ports* that may betray ye, strongly
From *light belief* first, then from *flattery*,
Especially where *woman* beats the *parley*;
The *body* of your *strength*, your noble *heart*
From ever yielding to dishonest ends,
Ridg'd round about with *virtue*, that no *breaches*,
No subtle *mines* may find you?

⁹ Our Authors, in carrying the metaphor of a *citadel* compared to the *mind* through so many divisions, seem to have built on the foundation of St. Paul, who in like manner carries on a metaphor from *armour* through its several parts. Ephesians vi. 11.

Put on the whole armour of God—having your *loins* girt about with *Truth*, and having on the *Breast-plate of Righteousness*.—Above all, taking the *Shield of Faith*, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the *fiery Darts* of the wicked; and take the *Helmet of Salvation*, and the sword of the *Spirit* which is the *Word of God*. See also the same metaphor in Isaiah lix. 17. from whom St. Paul took his. Were I to quote our Author's frequent resemblance to the stile and sentiments of the *Scriptures*, another very large field would open to us; and this would help us to the solution of two questions, which they who have a just taste of the excellencies of our old English Poets naturally ask: 1. How came the British muse in the very infancy of literature, when but just sprung from the dark womb of monkish superstition, to rise at once to such maturity, as she did in Spenser, Shakespeare, Beaumont, Fletcher, Jonson and Massenger? 2. What spirit is it that has animated the *frozen foggy genius of Britain* into
a nobler

IX MR. SEWARD'S PREFACE.

As Cellide had before used a *light behaviour* in trial of his virtue, upon finding it only a *trial*, and receiving from her this virtuous lecture, he rejoins;

How like the sun
Labouring in his *eclipse*, dark and *prodigious*
She shew'd till now? when having won his way,
How full of wonder he *breaks out* again
And sheds his *virtuous beams*?

Such passages as these are frequent in our Authors comedies; were they exprest only in genteel prose, they would rank with the very noblest passages of

a nobler and fiercer flame of *poetry* than was ever yet kindled in the bright invigorating climes of France and modern Italy; insomuch, that a Gallic and Italian eye is dazzled and offended at the brightness of the noblest expressions of Milton, and the Authors above-mentioned? We answer. It was no less a Spirit than the *Spirit of God*, it was the *Sun of Righteousness*, the *hallowed Light of the Scriptures* that was just then risen on the British clime, but is still hid in clouds and darkness to France and Italy. A *light* to which the brightest strokes of Milton and Shakespeare are but as the rays of the mid-day sun, when compared to that *ineffable inconceivable lustre* which surrounds the *throne of God*. When the zeal of religion ran high, and a collection of far the *noblest poems* that were ever wrote in the world, those of Job, David, Isaiah and all the Prophets were daily read, and publicly, solemnly and learnedly commented upon, in almost every town in the kingdom; when every man thought it a disgrace not to study them in private, and not to treasure the noblest parts of them in his memory, what wonder was it that our Poets should catch so much of the sacred fire, or that the British *genius* should be arrayed with the beams of the East? But when the love of the *scriptures* waxed faint, the *nerves* of our *poetry* grew in the same proportion weak and languid. One of the best means therefore to gain a true taste of the extreme poetic sublimity of the sacred *Scriptures*, is to converse with those *poets* whose stile and sentiments most resemble them. And the very best means to restore the British *genius* to its pristine vigour, and to create other Shakespeares and other Miltons, is to promote the study, love and admiration of those *Scriptures*.

A concurrent cause, which raised the spirit of *poetry* to such a height in *Queen Elizabeth's reign*, was the encouragement and influence of the *Queen* herself; to whom *polite literature* was the most courtly accomplishment. Look into Spenser's Description of her Lords and Favourites, and you'll find a *learned Queen* made a whole court of Poets, just as an *amorous monarch* afterwards made every flowery courtier write romance; and martial princes have turned intimidated armies into heroes.

Terence,

MR. SEWARD'S PREFACE. lxi

Terence, but what reason upon earth can be assigned, *but mere fashion*, why, because they are parts of *comedies*, they should be weakened and flattened into prose¹⁰ by drawing the *sinews* of their *strength* and *eclipsing* those *poetic beams* that shed vigour, life and lustre on every sentiment?—

Such *poetic* excellence therefore will the Reader find in the genteel parts of our Author's *comedies*, but, as before hinted, there is a *poetic stile* often equally proper and excellent even in the lowest *drollery of comedy*. Thus when the jocosè old Miramont in the Elder Brother catches austere solemn *magistrate* Brisac endeavouring to debauch his *servant's wife*—Before he breaks in upon him, he says ;

Oh, th' infinite frights that will assail this gentleman!
The *quartans*, *tertians*, and *quotidians*,
That'll hang, like *sergeants*, on his *worship's* shoulders!
How will those solemn looks appear to me,
And that *severe face* that *spake chains and shackles*!

How small a change of the comic words would turn this into the sublime? suppose it spoke of Nero by one who knew he would be at once deserted by the *senate* and *army*, and given up to the fury of the *people*.

What infinite frights will soon assail the tyrant?
What *terrors* like stern *lictors* will arrest him?
How will that fierce terrific eye appear,
Whose slightest bend spake dungeons, chains, and death?

Such as the former, is the general stile of our Author's drollery, particularly of Fletcher's; Beaumont deals chiefly in another species, the *burlesque epic*.

¹⁰ There is much less *prose* left in this edition than there was in all the former; in which the *measure* was often most miserably neglected. Wit Without Money, the very first Play which fell to my lot to prepare for the press after Mr. Theobald's death, was all printed as prose, except about twenty lines towards the end; but the Reader will now find it as true *measure* as almost any *comedy* of our Authors.

Thus

Ixii MR. SEWARD'S PREFACE.

Thus when the Little comic French Lawyer is run *fighting-mad*, and his *antagonist* excepts against his shirt for not being *laced* (as gentlemen's shirts of that age used to be) he answers,

Base and degenerate cousin, dost not know
An old and tatter'd colours to an enemy,
Is of more honour, and shews more ominous?
This shirt five times victorious I've fought under,
And cut thro' squadrons of your curious *cut-works*,
As I will do thro' thine; shake and be satisfy'd.

This *stile* runs thro' many of Beaumont's characters, beside La-Writ's, as Lazarillo, the Knight of the Burning-Pestle, Bessus's two Swordsmen, &c. and he has frequent allusions to and even parodies of the sublimest parts of Shakespeare; which both Mr. Symphon and Mr. Theobald look upon as *sneers* upon a poet of greater eminence than the supposed *sneerer* (a very great "crime if true) but I believe it an entire *mistake*. The nature of this *burlesque epic* requires the frequent use of the most known and most acknowledged expressions of sublimity, which applied to low objects render *them*, not the *author* of those expressions, ridiculous. Almost all men of wit make the same use of Shakespeare and Milton's expressions in common conversation without the least thought of sneering either; and indeed if every quotation from Shakespeare thus jocularly applied is a real *sneer* upon him, then all *burlesque sublime* is a *sneer* upon the *real sublime*, and Beaumont sneered himself as well as Shakespeare.

From these three short specimens the reader will form, we hope, a just idea of the three *styles*

" For a further defence of our Authors from this imputation, see note 43 of The Little French Lawyer, and note 32 of The Woman-Hater. In both which there is a mistake with regard to the Author of those Plays. When I wrote the notes, I supposed it Fletcher, till Beaumont's letter at the end of The Nice Valour, gave me a key, which is given to the Reader in the first section of the Preface, and which explains the difference of *manner* between Beaumont and Fletcher.

MR. SEWARD'S PREFACE. Ixiii.

used in our Author's *Comedies*, the *sublime*, the *droll* *poetic*, and the *burlesque sublime*. There is indeed a small mixture of *prose*, which is the only part of our old dramatic poets' style that moderns have vouchsafed to imitate. Did they acknowledge the truth, and confess their inability to rise to the *spirit*, *vigour*, and *dignity* of the other *styles*, they were pardonable. But far from it, our reform'd taste calls for *prose* only, and before Beaumont and Fletcher's plays can be endur'd by such *Attic ears*, they must be *corrected* into *prose*, as if, because well-brew'd *porter* is a wholesome draught, therefore *claret* and *burgundy* must be dashed with *porter* before they were drinkable. For a true specimen of our *modern taste*, we will give the reader one cup of our Author's *wine* thus *porteriz'd*, and that by *one* who perfectly knew the *palate* of the *age*, who pleas'd it greatly in this very instance, and some of whose *comedies* have as much or more merit than any moderns except Congreve. Mr. Cibber has consolidated two of our Author's plays, the *Elder Brother*, and the *Custom of the Country*, to form his *Love makes a Man*; or, the *Fop's Fortune*. In the former there are two old French noblemen, Lewis and Brisac, the first proud of his family and fortune, the other of his magisterial power and dignity; neither men of learning, and therefore both preferring courtly accomplishments, and the knowledge of the world, to the deepest knowledge of books, and the most extensive literature. Such characters exclude not good sense in general, but in that part of their characters only where their foibles lie; (as Polonius in *Hamlet* is a fool in his pedantic foibles, and a man of sense in all other instances) accordingly Fletcher makes Brisac and Lewis thus treat of a marriage between their children.

Bri. Good monsieur Lewis, I esteem myself
Much honour'd in your clear intent to join
Our ancient families, and make them one;

And

lxiv MR. SEWARD'S PREFACE.

And 'twill take from my age and cares, to live
And see what you have purpos'd put in act;
Of which your visit at this present is
A hopeful omen; I each minute expecting
Th' arrival of my sons; I have not wrong'd
Their birth for want of means and education,
To shape them to that course each was addicted;
And therefore that we may proceed discreetly,
Since what's concluded rashly seldom prospers,
You first shall take a strict perusal of them,
And then from your allowance, your fair daughter
May fashion her affection.

Lew. Monsieur Brisac,
You offer fair and nobly, and I'll meet you
In the same line of honour; and, I hope,
Being blest but with one daughter, I shall not
Appear impertinently curious,
Though with my utmost vigilance and study,
I labour to bestow her to her worth:
Let others speak her form, and future fortune
From me descending to her, I in that
Sit down with silence.

Bri. You may, my lord, securely,
Since Fame aloud proclaimeth her perfections,
Commanding all mens tongues to sing her praises.

I quote not this as an instance of the *sublime*,
but of our Authors *genteel dialogue* enliven'd by a
few *poetic figures*, as in the last lines Fame is
personis'd and commands the tongues of men. Now
let us see this dialogue *modernis'd*: The names of
the old gentlemen being chang'd to Antonio and
Charino, they thus confer.

Ant. Without compliment, my old friend, I shall think
myself much honour'd in your alliance; our families
are both ancient, our children young, and able to
support 'em; and I think the sooner we set 'em to
work the better.

Cha. Sir, you offer fair and nobly, and shall find I dare
meet you in the *same line of honour*; and I hope, since
I have but one girl in the world, you won't think me
a troublesome old fool, if I endeavour to bestow her
to her worth; therefore, if you please, before we
shake

MR. SEWARD'S PREFACE. lxx

shake hands, a word or two by the bye, for I have some considerable questions to ask you.

Ant. Ask 'em.

Cha. Well, in the first place, you say you have two sons.

Ant. Exactly.

Cha. And you are willing that one of 'em shall marry my daughter?

Ant. Willing.

Cha. My daughter Angelina?

Ant. Angelina.

Cha. And you are likewise content that the said Angelina shall survey 'em both, and (with my allowance) take to her lawful husband, which of 'em she pleases?

Ant. Content.

Cha. And you farther promise, that the person by her (and me) so chosen (be it elder or younger) shall be your sole heir; that is to say, shall be in a conditional possession, of at least three parts of your estate. You know the conditions, and this you positively promise?

Ant. To perform.

Cha. Why then, as the last token of my full consent and approbation, I give you my hand.

Ant. There's mine.

Cha. Is't a match?

Ant. A match.

Cha. Done.

Ant. Done.

Cha. And done!——that's enough——

Strike out an expression or two of Fletcher's, and a couple of grafiers would have put more sense into an *ox-bargain*. I blame not the *Authôr*, if a man's customers resolve to pay the price of *Champaign*, and yet insist upon *mild and stale*, who would refuse it them? This is only a specimen of the *taste* of the late *wonderfully enlightned* age. But as Shakespeare and Milton have already in a good measure dispersed the clouds of *prejudice* which had long obscured their excellencies; 'tis to be hoped that our eyes are now inured to bear the lustre of such *poets*, who most resemble these *suns of Britain*. To such readers therefore who are desirous of becoming acquainted with the excellencies

lxvi MR. SEWARD'S PREFACE.

of Beaumont and Fletcher, I shall beg leave to recommend their plays to be read in the following order, beginning with which species they like best *.

C L A S S I.

Tragedies and Tragi-Comedies.

Maid's Tragedy vol. 1
Philaster vol. 1
King and no King vol. 1
The Two Noble Kinsmen vol. 10
The Double Marriage vol. 7
The Bloody Brother, or Rollo vol. 5
The False One vol. 4
The Knight of Malta vol. 7
Valentinian vol. 4

Pastoral.

Faithful Shepherdes vol. 3

Comedies.

Elder Brother vol. 2
Rule a Wife and have a Wife vol. 3
Little French Lawyer vol. 4
Wit without Money vol. 2
Spanish Curate vol. 2
Nice Valour, or Passionate Mad-Man vol. 10

C L A S S II.

Laws of Candy vol. 4
Loyal Subject vol. 3
The Island Princess vol. 8
Thierry and Theodoret vol. 10
Wife for a Month vol. 5
Bonduca vol. 6

Burlesque Sublime.

The Knight of the Burning Pestle vol. 6

Fair Maid of the Mill.
Fair Maid of the Inn.
Wild-goose Chase.
Monsieur Thomas.
The Chances.
Honest Man's Fortune.
Custom of the Country.
Beggars Bush.
The Captain.
The Sea-Voyage.
Love's Cure, or the Martial Maid.
Coxcomb.
Woman-Hater.
Wit at several Weapons.
Women pleas'd.
Tamer tam'd.
Scornful Lady.

C L A S S III.

The Coronation vol. 9
The Queen of Corinth vol. 6
The Lover's Progress vol. 5
The Prophetess vol. 6
Cupid's Revenge vol. 9

Mask vol. 10
Moral Representations vol. 10

Pilgrim vol. 5
Love's Pilgrimage vol. 7
Night-Walker vol. 8
Noble Gentleman vol. 2

[* *Whimsical as this classing of our Authors' plays must appear, it is surely more whimsical that Mr. Seward could not find a place in either class for those excellent comedies, The Mad Lover, and The Humorous Lieutenant.*]

The

MR. SEWARD'S PREFACE. lxvii

The Reader will find many excellent things in this last class, for the plays of our Authors do not differ from each other near so much as those of Shakespeare. The three last tragedies are detruded so low on account of their *magick* and *machinery*, in which our Authors fall shorter of Shakespeare than in any other of their attempts to imitate him. What is the reason of this? Is it that their *genius* improved by literature and polite conversation, could well describe *men* and *manners*, but had not that *poetick* that *creative power* to form new beings and new worlds,

——— and give to airy nothings
A local habitation and a name———

as Shakespeare excellently describes his own genius? I believe not. The *enthusiasm* of *passions* which Beaumont and Fletcher are so frequently rapt into, and the vast variety of distinguish'd characters which they have so admirably drawn, shew as strong powers of invention as the creation of *witches* and *raising* of ghosts. Their deficiency therefore in *magick* is accountable from a cause far different from a *poverty of imagination*; it was the accidental *disadvantage of a liberal and learned education*: *Sorcery*, *witchcraft*, *astrology*, *ghosts*, and *apparitions*, were then the universal belief of both the *great vulgar* and the *small*, nay they were even the *parliamentary*, the *national creed*; only some *early-enlightned minds* saw and contemned the whole superstitious trumpery: Among these our *Authors* were probably initiated from their school-days into a deep-grounded contempt of it, which breaks out in many parts of their Works, and particularly in *The Bloody Brother* and *The Fair Maid of the Inn*, where they began that admirable banter which the excellent Butler carried on exactly in the same strain, and which, with such a *second*, has at last drove the *bugbears* from the minds of almost all men of common understanding. But here was our Authors disadvantage; the taste of their age called aloud for the assistance of *ghosts* and

e 2

forcery

lxviii MR. SEWARD'S PREFACE.

forcery to heighten the horror of *Tragedy*; this horror they had never felt, never heard of but with contempt, and consequently they had no *arche-types* in their own breasts of what they were called on to describe. Whereas Shakespeare from his low education¹² had believed and felt all the horrors he painted; for though the universities and inns of court were in some degree

¹² *Shakespeare from his low education, &c.*] The gentleman who is most obliged to Shakespeare, and to whom Shakespeare is most obliged of any man living, happening to see the sheet of the Preface where Shakespeare's peculiar superiority over our *Authors* in his *magic*, is ascribed to the accidental advantage of a low education, he could not well brook a passage which seemed to derogate from his favourite. As Shakespeare had as good sense as our Authors, he thought, he would be as free from real superstition. This does not always follow. Education will tincture even the brightest parts. There is proof that our *Authors* held all *forcery*, *witchcraft*, &c. as mere juggler's tricks, but not the least room to doubt of Shakespeare's having believed them in his youth, whatever he did afterwards; and this is all that is asserted. Is this therefore a derogation? No, it only shews the amazing power of his genius; a genius which could turn the bugbears of his former credulity into the noblest poetic machines. Just as Homer built his machinery on the superstitions which he had been bred up to. Both indeed give great distinction of characters, and great poetic dignity to the dæmons they introduce; nay, they form some new ones; but the system they build on is the vulgar creed. And here (after giving due praise to the gentleman above, for restoring Shakespeare's magick to its genuine horror, out of that low buffoonery which former actors and managers of theatres had flung it into) I shall shew in what light Shakespeare's low education always appeared to me by the following epitaph wrote many years since, and published in Mr. Doddsley's Miscellany.

Upon SHAKESPEARE'S Monument at Stratford upon Avon.

- ' Great Homer's birth sev'n rival cities claim,
- ' Too mighty such *monopoly* of Fame:
- ' Yet not to birth alone did Homer owe
- ' His wondrous worth; what Ægypt could bestow,
- ' With all the schools of Greece and Asia join'd,
- ' Enlarg'd th' immense expansion of his mind.
- ' Nor yet unrival'd the Mæonian strain,
- ' The British *eagle** and the Mantuan *swan*, [* Milton.
- ' Tow'r equal heights. But happier Stratford, thou
- ' With incontest'd laurels deck thy brow;
- ' Thy *bard* was thine *unschool'd*, and from thee brought
- ' More than all Ægypt, Greece, or Asia, taught;
- ' Not Homer's self such matchless laurels won,
- ' The Greek has *rivals*, but thy Shakespeare none.'

[The above Note was inserted as a Postscript to Seward's Preface.]
freed

MR. SEWARD'S PREFACE. lxix

freed from these dreams of superstition, the banks of the Avon were then *haunted* on every side.

There tript with printless foot the elves of hills,
Brooks, lakes, and groves; there Sorcery bedimn'd
The noon-tide sun, call'd forth the mutinous winds,
And 'twixt the green sea and the azur'd vault
Set roaring War, &c. *Tempest.*

So that Shakespeare can scarcely be said to create a new world in his *magick*; he went but back to his native country, and only dressed their *goblins* in poetic weeds; hence even Theseus is not attended by his own deities*, Minerva, Venus, the *fauns*, *satyrs*, &c. but by Oberon and his *fairies*: Whereas our *Authors* however awkwardly they treat of *ghosts* and *sorcerers*, yet when they get back to Greece (which was as it were their *native soil*) they introduce the *classic deities* with ease and dignity, as Fletcher in particular does in his *Faithful Shepherdess*, and both of them in their *Masques*; the last of which is put in the third class not from any deficiency in the composition, but from the nature of the allegorical *Masque* which, when no real characters are intermixed, ought in general to rank below Tragedy and Comedy. Our Authors, who wrote them because they were in fashion, have themselves shewed how light they held them.

They must commend their king, and speak in praise
Of the assembly; bless the bride and bridegroom
In person of some god; they're tied to rules
Of flattery.— *Maid's Tragedy, act i. scene i.*

This was probably wrote by Beaumont with an eye to the *Masque* at Gray's Inn, as well as *masques* in general. The Reader will find a farther account of our Authors' Plays, and what share Mr. Shirley is supposed to have had in the completion of some that

[* Mr. Seward does not seem to have recollected, that in the Two Noble Kinsmen there is an equal mixture of Gothick and Grecian manners. It was the common error of all our old English writers from Chaucer to Milton, who has introduced chivalry even into *Paradise Lost*.]

lxx MR. SEWARD'S PREFACE.

were left imperfect in Mr. Sympson's Lives of the Authors. But before I finish my account of them, it is necessary to apologise for a fault which must shock every modest reader: It is their frequent use of *gross* and *indecent* expressions. They have this fault in common with Shakespeare, who is sometimes more gross than they ever are, but I think grossness does not occur quite so often in him. In the second class of parallel passages where the hands of Shakespeare and our Authors were not distinguishable, I omitted one instance for decency sake, but I will insert it here as proper to the subject we are now upon. Philaster being violently agitated by jealousy, and firmly believing his mistress to have been loose, thus speaks of a letter which he has just received from her,

———Oh, let all women
That love black deeds learn to dissemble here!
Here, by this paper, she doth write to me,
As if her heart were mines of adamant
To all the world beside; but unto me,
A maiden snow that melted with my looks.

Vol. i. page 144, of this Edition.

Strength and delicacy are here in perfect union. In like manner Posthumus in Cymbeline, act ii. agitated by as violent a jealousy of his wife, thus describes her seeming modesty:

———Oh, vengeance! vengeance!
Me of my lawful pleasure she restrain'd,
And pray'd me oft forbearance, did it with
A pudency so rosy, the sweet look on't
Might well have warm'd old Saturn; that I thought her
As chaste as unsmil'd snow.——

This is a most amiable picture of conjugal delicacy, but it may be justly objected that it draws the curtains of the marriage-bed, and exposes it to the view of the world; and if the Reader turns to the speech of which it is a part, he will find much grosser expressions in the sequel. But these were so far from offending the ears of our ancestors, that Beaumont and Fletcher, though

MR. SEWARD'S PREFACE. lxxi

though so often guilty of them, are perpetually celebrated by the writers of their own and of the following age, as the great *reformers* of the *drama* from *bawdry* and *ribaldry*. Thus when Fletcher's charming Pastoral, *The Faithful Shepherdess*, had been damned by its first night's audience, Jonson says that they damned it for want of the vicious and bawdy scenes which they had been accustomed to, and then breaks out in a rapture worthy of Jonson, worthy of Fletcher.

I that am glad thy innocence was thy guilt,
And wish that all the *musés blood* was spilt
In such a *martyrdom*, to vex their eyes
Do crown thy murder'd poem, &c.

Yet even this pattern of chastity is not free from expressions which would now be justly deemed too gross for the stage. Sir John Berkenhead, speaking of Fletcher's Works in general, says,

And as thy thoughts were clear, so innocent,
Thy *fancy* gave no unswept language vent,
Slander'd no laws, prophan'd no holy page,
As if thy ¹³ father's crozier rul'd the stage.

Our Poets frequently boast of this *chastity* of language themselves. See the prologue to *The Knight of the Burning Pestle*. Lovelace, a poet of no small eminence, speaks of the great delicacy of expression even in the Custom of the Country.

View here a loose thought said with such a grace,
Minerva might have spoke in Venus' face,
So well disguis'd, that 'twas conceiv'd by none,
But Cupid had Diana's linnen on.

Yet of this play Dryden asserts that it contains more bawdry than all his plays together. What must we say of these different accounts? Why 'tis clear as day, that the stile of the age was so changed, that what was formerly not esteemed in the least degree indecent, was now become very much so; just as in

¹³ Fletcher bishop of London.

lxxii MR. SEWARD'S PREFACE.

Chaucer, the very filthiest words are used without disguise, and says Beaumont in excuse for him, he gave those expressions to low characters, with whom they were then in common use, and whom he could not therefore draw naturally without them. The same plea is now necessary for Beaumont himself and all his contemporary Dramatic Poets; but there is this grand and essential difference between the gross expressions of our old poets, and the more *delicate lewdness* of modern plays. In the former, gross expressions are generally the language of low life, and are given to characters which are set in despicable lights: In the latter, *lewdness* is frequently the characteristic of the *hero* of the comedy, and so intended to inflame the passions and corrupt the heart. Thus much is necessary in defence, not only of our Authors, but of Mr. Sympson and myself, for engaging in the publication of Works which contain a great many indecencies, which we could have wished to have been omitted; and which, when I began to prepare my part of the work for the press, I had actually struck off, as far as I could do it without injuring the connection of the context; but the booksellers press'd, and indeed insisted upon their restoration: They very sensibly urged the last-mentioned plea, and thought that the bare notion of a curtailed edition would greatly prejudice the sale of it. We hope therefore that the reader will not be too severe on the editors of works which have great excellencies, and which in general tend to promote virtue and chastity, though the custom of the age made the Authors not entirely abstain from expressions not then esteemed gross, but which now must offend every modest ear.

Hitherto we have treated of our Authors and their merit, something must be added of the attempt of the present Editors to clear them from that mass of confusion and obscurity flung upon them by the inaccuracy of former editors, or what was worse, by the wilfulness and ignorance of our old players, who kept most of their plays many years in manuscript

as

MR. SEWARD'S PREFACE. lxxiii

as mere play-house properties, to be changed and mangled by every new actor's humour and fancy. As this was the case of most of our old plays, the learned Mr. Upton seems strangely mistaken in asserting that no more liberty ought to be taken in the correction of the old [mangled] text of Shakespeare, than with the two first [accurate] editions of *Paradise Lost*. Upon this groundless assertion are built those very undeserved reflections upon the eminent *Editors* of Shakespeare who are compared to the *Vice* of the old comedy beating their author's original text with their daggers of lath. Surely something very different from such sarcasm is due from every true lover of Shakespeare to those editors whose emendations have cleared so many obscurities, and made so many readers study and perceive innumerable excellencies which had otherwise been passed over unnoted and perhaps despised. For verbal criticism, when it means the restoring the true reading to the mangled text, very justly holds the palm from every other species of criticism, as it cannot be performed with success without comprehending all the rest; it must clearly perceive the style, manner, characters, beauties and defects: And to this must be added some sparks of that *original fire* that animated the *poet's own invention*. No sooner therefore were *criticisms* wrote on our English poets, but each deep-read scholar whose severer studies had made him frown with contempt on poems and plays, was taken in to read, to study, to be enamoured: He rejoiced to try his strength with the editor, and to become a *critic* himself: Nay, even Dr. Bentley's strange absurdities in his notes on Milton, had this good effect, that they engaged a Pearce* to answer, and perhaps were the first motives to induce the greatest *poet*, the most universal *genius* †, one of the greatest *orators*, and one of

[* Dr. Zachary Pearce, late Bishop of Rochester. R.]

[† Mr. Seward here ascribes to Bentley's notes on Milton consequences which they did not produce: Mr. Pope's Edition of Shakespeare appeared several years before Bentley published his Edition of Milton; and, from the date and contents of the celebrated Letter of bishop Warburton to

lxxiv Mr. SEWARD'S PREFACE.

the most *industrious scholars* in the kingdom each to become editors of Shakespeare. A Pope, a Warburton, and a Hanmer did honour to the *science* by engaging in criticism; but the worth of that *science* is most apparent from the distinction Mr. Theobald gained in the learned world, who had no other claim to honour but as a *critic* on Shakespeare. In this light his fame remains fresh and unblasted though the *lightning* of Mr. Pope and the thunder of Mr. Warburton have been both lanced at his head. Mr. Pope being far too great an *original* himself to submit his own taste to that of Shakespeare's was fairly driven out of the field of criticism by the plain force of reason and argument; but he soon retired to his *poetic citadel*, and from thence played such a *volley* of *wit* and *humour* on his *antagonist*, as gave him a very grotesque *profile* on his left; but he never drove him from his *hold* on Shakespeare, and his countenance on that side is still clear and unspotted. Mr. Warburton's attack was more dangerous, but though he was angry from the apprehension of personal injuries, yet his justice has still left Mr. Theobald in possession of great numbers of excellent emendations, which will always render his name respectable. The mention of the merit of *criticism* in establishing the taste of the age, in raising respect in the contemptuous, and attention in the careless readers of our old poets, naturally leads us to an enquiry, Whence it comes to pass, that whilst almost every one buys and reads the works of our late critical editors, nay almost every man of learning aims at imitating them and making emendations himself, yet it is still the fashion to flurt at the names of *critic* and *commentator*, and almost to treat the very science with derision. The enquiry has been often made by

Concannon (which, although it has not yet found its way to the press, Dr. Akenfide says, 'will probably be remembered as long as any of this prelate's writings,') it manifestly appears, that the notes of that learned Editor were, what he asserts them in his Preface to have been, 'among his younger amusements,' and consequently prior to the publication of Bentley's *Milton*. R.]

critics

MR. SEWARD'S PREFACE. lxxv

critics themselves, and all have said, that it was owing to the strange mistakes and blunders of former critics, to mens engaging in a *science* which they had neither learning nor talents to manage and adorn. Each thinking himself exempt from the censure, and each having it retorted upon him in his turn. If this is the case, I am afraid all remedy is hopeless; if the great names above-mentioned did really want abilities for the province they undertook, who shall dare to hope that he possesses them? If frequent mistakes in an editor are totally to sink his merit, who can escape the common wreck?—But I am far from thinking this to be the sole or even the principal cause; and the two, which I shall assign as much greater inlets to this disgrace on the art of criticism, are such as admit of the easiest remedy in the world, a remedy in the power of *critics* themselves, and which their own interest loudly calls on them all to apply. The first cause is; that in a science the most fallible of all others, depending in a great measure on the tottering bottom of mere *conjecture*, almost every critic assumes the air of *certainty*, *positiveness* and *infallibility*; he seems sure never to miss his way, though in a wilderness of confusion, never to stumble in a path always gloomy, and sometimes as dark as midnight. Hence he *dogmatizes*, when he should only *propose*, and dictates his *guesses* in the *despotic style*. The reader, and every rival editor, catches the same spirit, all his faults become unpardonable, and the demerit of a few mistakes shall overwhelm the merit of all his just emendations: He deems himself perfect, and perfection is demanded at his hands; and this being no where else found but by each writer in his own works, every *putter-forth* of two or three emendations swells as big, and flings his spittle as liberally on a Warburton, a Hanmer, or a Theobald, as if he were the *giant* and they the *dwarfs* of criticism; and he has, upon the supposition of perfection being necessary, this evident advantage of them, that an editor of three or four emendations

has

lxxvi MR. SEWARD'S PREFACE.

has a much better chance to avoid mistakes than the editors of three or four thousand; though it has generally happened, that they who were very obscure in merit have had their demerits as glaring as the most voluminous editors.

From the same source arises the second still more remarkable cause of *critical disgrace*, it is the *ill language* and *ungentleman-like treatment* which *critics* have so frequently given their rivals. If the professors of the same *science* are continually cuffing and buffeting each other, the world will set them on, laugh at, and enjoy the ridiculous scuffle. Is it not amazing, that *ignorant, absurd, blundering dunces* and *blockheads* should be the common epithets and titles, that gentlemen of learning and liberal education bestow on each other, for such mistakes as they know that all their *brother critics* have been constantly guilty of, and which nothing but the vainest self-sufficiency can make them suppose themselves exempt from?

cheu

Quam temere in nosmet legem sancimus iniquam!

If we ourselves are guilty of the very same sort of mistakes for which we stigmatize others as blunderers and blockheads, we brand our own foreheads by our own *verdict*, *obloquy* upon us is bare *justice*, and we become *blunderers* and *blockheads* upon *record*. The first remarkable introducer* of critical editions of our English Poets thought his superior learning gave him a right to tyrannise and trample upon all his rival editors; but having none to exercise his fury upon, in his edition of *Paradise Lost*, he raised a *phantom editor*, in the person of whom he flung dirt upon Milton *himself*. But the present worthy Bishop of Bangor† not only cleared his *beloved poet* from such unjust aspersions, but shewed that he could answer slander, sneer and obloquy, with decency, candour, and good manners. Happy had it been for the

[* Dr. Bentley. R.]

[† Afterwards Bishop of Rochester. R.]

MR. SEWARD'S PREFACE. lxxvii

learned world, had those excellent notes been at first joined to Milton's *text*; that his *candour*, and not the other's *coarseness*, might have been the standard of critical language; but as great part of those notes are now engrafted into Dr. Newton's elegant edition, it is to be hoped that they will henceforth become so. Happy for us had it been too, if Sir Thomas Hanmer had carried on that *candour* and *good manners* which appear in his *Preface* into a body of notes upon his author; he had not only placed his emendations in a much fairer and more conspicuous light; he had not only avoided the objection which some have made of an arbitrary insertion of his alterations into the text; but he would have set us an example of elegance and politeness of style, which we must perhaps in vain hope for from any man, that has not been long exercised in one of the great schools of *rhétoric*, the *houses of parliament*; unless some other *eminent orator* or another *speaker* should become an editor, as well as a patron of criticisms. Mr. Theobald, who was a much better critic on Shakespeare than Dr. Bentley had been on Milton, yet followed the doctor's *style* and *manner*, and in some measure deserved the lash he smarted under in the *Dunciad*; for though he had a right to correct Mr. Pope's errors upon Shakespeare, he had none to use so exalted a character with the least disrespect, much less with derision and contempt. Mr. Upton a gentleman of very distinguished literature, has in his *Remarks* on Shakespeare followed this style of triumph and insult over his rival *critics*, and as this gentleman will, I hope, long continue his services to the learned world, I will endeavour to convince him of the injustice and ill policy of such treatment of them. The best *canon* to judge of an editor's merits, seems to be a computation of the good and bad alterations which he has made in the text; if the latter are predominant he leaves his author worse than he found him, and *demerits* only appear at the bottom of the account: If the good are most numerous, put the
bad

lxxviii MR. SEWARD'S PREFACE.

bad ones on the side of *debtor*, *balance* the whole, and we shall easily see what praises are due to him. Now if some hundred good ones remain upon *balance* to each of the three last Editors of Shakespeare, how unjust is it for a publisher of only thirty or forty alterations (supposing them all to be perfectly just) to speak with contempt of those, whose merits are so much more conspicuous than his own? But to do this, without an assurance of being himself exempt from the like mistakes, is as *impolitic* as it is *unjust*. I have not now time for an examination of this gentleman's criticisms on Shakespeare; but I will choose a very particular *specimen of his mistakes*, for it shall be the very same which a real friend of this gentleman published as a *specimen of his excellencies*, in Mr. Doddsley's *Musæum*, a monthly pamphlet then in great repute. This *specimen* consisted of two alterations which the letter-writer thought very happy ones. The first was in Antony and Cleopatra, act ii. scene iv. The Soothsayer thus advises Antony to shun the society of Cæsar.

———O Antony, stay not by his side.
Thy dæmon, that's thy spirit which keeps thee, is
Noble, courageous, high, unmatchable,
Where Cæsar's is not. But near him thy angel
Becomes a *fear*——

i. e. becomes not only fearful but even *fear itself*. The image is extremely poetical; for as Antony's dæmon was according to the heathen theology *personified* and made something different from Antony, so the passion of *fear* is not only *personified*, but even *pluralised*: The imagination beholds many *fears*, and Antony's spirit becomes one of them. Thus *doubts* and *fears* are personified in Macbeth, and become his vexatious companions.

———I'm cabin'd, crib'd, bound in
To sawcy doubts and *fears*.

Thus God himself personifies *fear*, and sends it among the Canaanites as the harbinger of Israel.
Exodus

MR. SEWARD'S PREFACE. lxxix

Exodus xxiii. and xxvii. And again in Ezekiel xxx. 13. He says, *I will put a fear in the land of Egypt.* Thus the companions of Mars in Homer are Δεῖμος τ' ἡδὲ Φόβος. Δ. 440. *Terror and fear.* But the instance the most apposite, is in The Maid's Tragedy, where the forlorn Aspatia sees her servant working the story of Theseus and Ariadne, and thus advises her to punish the perfidy of the former.

In this place work a quick-sand,
And over it a shallow smiling water,
And his ship ploughing it; and then a *fear*,
Do that *fear* bravely. Vol. i. p. 38.

Here though fear could only in painting be expressed on their countenances, yet poetry goes farther,

—and gives to airy nothings
A local habitation and a name.

These are those *great strokes* which a man must be born with a soul to perceive as well as write, otherwise not all the reading of an Upton or a Bentley can give the least idea of them. These are those inimitable graces of poetry which a *critic's* pencil should no more dare to retouch than a modern painter should the cheek or eye of a Raphael's madona. For see how flat and dim it will appear in this gentleman's celebrated alteration, he reads,

—but near him thy angel
Becomes *afear'd* *.

[* Mr. Seward here introduces a note containing a very prolix commentary on some passages in Shakespeare's *Antony and Cleopatra*—In the lines,

‘ ————— If we draw lots, he speeds;
‘ His cocks do win the battle still of mine,
‘ When it is all to nought; and his quails ever
‘ But mine *in-hoop'd* at odds,’

he says there is ‘ evidently a sad *anti climax*: His cocks win the battle of mine when it is all to nought on my side, and his quails, ‘ fighting in a hoop, beat mine when the odds are on my side;’ and would therefore read,

‘ Beat mine in *whoop'd-at* odds.’

Dr.

Ixxx. MR. SEWARD'S PREFACE.

How should we have flatned our Authors if we had, as the Rehearsal calls it, *transposed* them in the like manner?

In this place work a quicksand,
And over it a shallow smiling water,
And his ship ploughing it, and *them* *afear'd*;
Do *their* fear bravely.—

The second instance quoted in the Musæum as a proof of Mr. Upton's excellency, is his alteration of another of Shakespeare's *peculiar graces* in the following celebrated passage.

Ay, but to die, and go we know not where;
To lie in cold obstruction, and to rot:
This sensible warm motion to become
A kneaded *clod*, and the *delighted* spirit
To bathe in fiery floods, or to reside
In thrilling regions of thick-ribbed ice.

The epithet *delighted* in the fourth line is extremely beautiful, as it carries on the fine antithesis between the joys of life and the horrors of death. *This sensible warm motion must become a kneaded clod, and this spirit, delighted* as it has hitherto been with the soothing delicacies of sense and the pleasing ecstasies of youthful fancy, *must bathe in fiery floods*. This is

Dr. Johnson mentions and rejects this variation; Dr. Farmer denies the necessity of change.

'The editions, says Seward, which distinguish Antony's speech (as conjectured by Cleopatra, *act i. sc. v.*) either by Italics or commas, make him only say, 'Where's my serpent of old Nile?' the rest is Cleopatra's own.—Antony's speech should be continued as the metaphor is,

" ——— Where's my serpent of old Nile?

" ——— Now I feed myself

" With most delicious poison?—

'Both parts belong to him.' No Editor of Shakespeare mentions this. For BROAD-fronted Cæsar he would substitute BALD-fronted. This Steevens notices.

Mr. Seward also reprobates Hanmer's alteration of *arm-gaunt* to *arm-girt*; 'I suppose (says he) he meant *with arms or shoulders bound round with trappings*. The expression is very stiff in this sense, and justly rejected by Mr. Warburton, who restores *arm gaunt*, and explains

MR. SEWARD'S PREFACE. lxxxi

peculiarly proper from a youth just snatched from revelry and wantonness, to suffer the anguish and horror of a shameful death. But this beautiful sense not being seen, Mr. Upton makes the first editor surprisingly blind indeed, for he says that he did not see the absurdity of a spirit's being *delighted to bathe in fiery floods*. Upon supposition therefore of this absurdity being chargeable on the old text, he alters *delighted spirit* to *delinquent spirit*: A change which totally loses the whole spirit of the poet's original sentiment. These are such mistakes, that neither the most extensive literature nor the accuracy of a Locke's judgment can secure a man from; nor indeed any thing but a *poetic taste*, a soul that

Is of imagination all compact,

That can follow Shakespeare in his stupendous flights,

And shoot from earth to Heav'n, from Heav'n to earth.
Midsummer Night's Dream.

But should such a genius contemn and deride men of cooler reason and superior knowledge? No; nor should the deep-read scholar despise him. Great learning and quickness of parts very rarely meet in one breast: When they do, they are excellent indeed; but separately they are extremely valuable. Far therefore from contempt or variance, they should, like sister-

' plains it of a war-horse grown *gaunt* or lean by long marches and frequent fights. But why must Antony, after a profound peace and a long revel in the arms of Cleopatra upon his return to Rome, have nothing to ride but an old battered lean war-horse? Besides, lean horses are seldom remarkable like this for neighing loud and vigorously. By *arm* we all understand the *shoulder*, in Latin, *Armatus*; *gaunt* is *lean* or *thin*. It is common for poets to mention the most distinguished beauty of any thing to express beauty in general, by *synecdoche* a part is put for the whole: *Arm-gaunt* therefore signifies *thin shouldered*, which we know to be one of the principal beauties of a horse, and the epithet has, from the uncommon use of either part of the compound word in this sense, an *antique dignity* and grandeur in sound that poets much delight in.' *Edwards sneers at this; but surely Mr. Seward's argument is judicious.*]

VOL. I.

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sciences,

lxxxii MR. SEWARD'S PREFACE.

sciences, love and accord, and *each in honour prefer the other to itself*. Mr. Upton possesses the first of these characters in a very eminent degree, and the * learned world have only to complain of his imposing mere conjectures upon them for absolute certainties, and of his rough treatment of his brother critics, and then to acknowledge its obligations to him for many judicious criticisms and emendations on Shakespeare and other Authors. Shakespeare alone is a vast garden of criticism, where though the editors have pulled up great numbers of weeds, and the view is much improv'd, yet many are still left, and each of the editors have mistakingly pulled up some flowers which want to be replaced. And this will be the fate of every critic who knows not every single word, history, custom, trade, &c. that Shakespeare himself knew, which at this distance of time is next to an impossibility. What room therefore for quarrels and insults upon each other? *Veniam petimusque damusque*, should be our general rule and motto. Without this we in this edition stand self-condemned. Beaumont and Fletcher are another field of criticism next in beauty to Shakespeare, and like him over-run with weeds, many of which are, we hope, now rooted out; and some real flowers, we fear, mistakingly pluckt up with them. Far therefore from the least pretence to perfection, from the least right to impose our conjectures as infallible; we have only inserted those in the text which for the reasons assigned in the notes appeared more probable than the former readings. We have endeavoured to give fair play to the old text, by turning it on every side, and allowing it all the interpretations we could possibly affix to the words, and where it appeared corrupt, we never inserted our own reading without giving what we thought a probable account of the method how such

[* Seward here introduces a very long Note, to refute sundry opinions of Upton on scriptural topics: As nothing can be more distant from our subject, we have omitted it.]

MR. SEWARD'S PREFACE. lxxxiii.

a change had been before made. At least, as I can properly speak for myself only, these were the rules I always wish to have followed, and endeavoured to follow, as soon as I became a principal in the work. But the share which I had in it, gives not the least room for any thing like completion on my part. The assistance which I gave Mr. Theobald and Mr. Symphon, who published about two thirds of the work, was by necessary avocations intermitted through several plays, and the others more or less attended to, as business or company would permit, or as the plays seemed more or less to deserve attention. To what I printed myself, I only dedicated some few of the many leisure hours which I had in a country village, hoping for pardon for the idleness rather than merit from the usefulness of the work. If these notes should ever go through a second edition, I shall gratefully acknowledge any emendations either of them or the text of our Authors, which any reader will favour me with ; and must say to each,

——— *Si quid novisti rectius istis,
Candidus imperti ; si non, his utere mecum.*

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COMMENDATORY POEMS.

I.

To my Friend Master JOHN FLETCHER, upon his
Faithful Shepherdess.

I KNOW too well, that, no more than the man,
That travels thro' the burning desarts, can,
When he is beaten with the raging sun,
Half-smother'd with the dust, have power to run
From a cool river, which himself doth find,
Ere he be slak'd; no more can he, whose mind
Joys in the Muses, hold from that delight,
When Nature, and his full thoughts bid him write¹.
Yet wish I those, whom I for friends have known,
'To sing their thoughts to no ears but their own.
Why should the man, whose wit ne'er had a stain,
Upon the public stage present this vein,
And make a thousand men in judgment sit,
To call in question his undoubted wit,
Scarce two of which can understand the laws
Which they should judge by, nor the party's cause?
Among the rout, there is not one that hath
In his own censure an explicit faith;
One company, knowing they judgment lack,
Ground their belief on the next man in black;
Others, on him that makes signs, and is mute;
Some like, as he does in the fairest suit;
He, as his mistress doth; and she, by chance;
Nor want there those, who, as the boy doth dance

¹ *When Nature and his full thoughts bid him write.*] Here says the judicious writer of Beaumont's life in the General Dictionary, Beaumont evidently shews that he was fired with that violent passion for writing, which the poets very justly call inspiration; and he makes this one proof of Beaumont's not being a mere corrector of Fletcher's works, but a joint author. As I think I have collected some stronger proofs of this, both external and internal than have been yet produced, and as I have already built the former part of my Preface upon these proofs, I shall place them before the reader in the next note just as they occurred to me.

Seavard.

Between

lxxxvi COMMENDATORY POEMS.

Between the acts, will censure the whole play;
Some like, if the wax-lights be new that day;
But multitudes there are, whose judgment goes
Headlong according to the actor's cloaths.
For this, these public things and I agree
So ill, that, but to do a right to thee,
I had not been persuaded to have hurl'd
These few, ill-spoken lines into the world;
Both to be read, and censur'd of, by those
Whose very reading makes verse senseless prose³;

³ *Both to be read, and censur'd of by those,*

Whose very reading makes verse senseless prose.] Here we see a consciousness of the Poet's own merit, and an indignation at the stupidity of the age he lived in, which seem to have been the characteristics of Beaumont and Jonson. This will appear stronger in the process of this note, in which I shall endeavour to prove what share Beaumont had in the composition of the following plays. I have already mentioned that Mr. Earl's testimony, wrote immediately after Beaumont's death, is decisive as to Beaumont's having the largest share in the composition of the Maid's Tragedy, Philaster, and the King and no King, and that Bessus in particular was drawn by him. [See Mr. Earl's poem below.] This was undoubtedly the reason why Beaumont's name is put first in the old quarto's of these plays, published by the players after Beaumont's death, but before Fletcher's. For would the players have complimented the dead at the expence of their living friend, patron, and supporter? After two such proofs as these, general expressions or even traditional opinions of the panegyric-writers thirty years after are lighter than vanity itself. From these plays no distinction of hands between Beaumont and Fletcher was discerned, nor any suspicion of such a distinction occurred 'till I came to the Woman Hater, vol. 10. which appeared visibly to have more of Jonson's manner than any play I had before met with, which I mentioned at note 32 on that play, when deceived as Langbane had been by the first quarto (published several years after the death of both the Authors) I verily thought that it had been Fletcher's only. I had not then attended to the poem of Beaumont's to Jonson, published at the end of the Nice Valour, and Woman-Hater, by the second folio. If the reader will consult that poem, he will find that it was sent from the country to Jonson with two of the precedent comedies not then finished, but which Beaumont claims as his own.

*Ben, when these scenes are perfect, we'll taste wine,
I'll drink thy muse's health, thou shalt quaff mine.*

It is plain that they had been his amusement during a summer vacation in the country, when he had no companion but his muse to entertain him; for all the former part of the poem is a description of the execrable wine, and the more execrable company which he was forced to endure. Fletcher therefore could not be with him. So that there are certainly two comedies which properly belong to Beaumont only, which therefore we must endeavour to find out. The verses tell

COMMENDATORY POEMS. lxxxvii

Such as must spend above an hour, to spell
A challenge on a post, to know it well.

us that he acknowledged all he had to be owing to Jonson, there is no doubt therefore of his imitating Jonson's manner in these comedies. Shirley in the first folio, and the publisher of the second folio, both agree in making the *Nice Valour* one of these plays: Now this play is extremely in Jonson's manner as is observed in the beginning of the Preface and at note 8 on the verses to Jonson. The Prologue of this play has no weight, being wrote several years after it, but the Epilogue was evidently wrote in the Author's life time, probably either by the Author himself, or else by his friend Jonson: For 'tis extremely like Jonson in his Prologues and Epilogues, who generally lets his audience know, that if they did not admire him it was their faults, not his. So this Epilogue makes the Author declare

——— *the play is good,*

*He says, * he knows it, if well understood.* [* The Author. How unlike is this to Fletcher and Shakespeare's manner, who, when they join together in the *Two Noble Kinsmen*, are even *Modersty itself*? See the Prologue and Epilogue to that play, vol. 10. the latter has these lines;

*And yet mistake me not, I am not bold,
We've no such cause. If the tale we have told
(For 'tis no other) any way content,
(For to that honest purpose it was meant)
We have our end; and ye shall have e'er long,
I dare say many a better to prolong
Your old loves to us. ———*

I hope the reader will now see sufficient grounds to believe that the *Nice Valour* was Beaumont's play: It is not demonstration, but it is a high degree of probability. But still the distinction of manner from Fletcher, in personizing the passions and not drawing from real life spoke of above, will not follow if Fletcher wrote the *Woman Hater*, as the first edition in quarto of that play asserts, but the second contradicts it, and puts Beaumont's name first in the title page, and claims its changes from the Author's manuscript. The publisher of the second folio follows the second quarto, and makes it one of the plays referred to in Beaumont's verses. The Prologue appears to be wrote by the Author himself, speaks of himself in the singular number, and shews great confidence in the goodness of the play, and an utter contempt of twopenny gallery judges. Here Beaumont's hand therefore seemed visible. I therefore began to recollect which of the foregoing plays most resembled this, to see what light might be gained from them; the first that occurred was the *Knight of the Burning Pestle*, which is all *burlesque sublime*, as *Lazarillo's* character in the *Woman Hater* is throughout. Here all the editions give the *Knight* to Beaumont and Fletcher, this therefore is clear, and the Prologue of that play is in stile and sentiments so exactly like that of the *Woman Hater*, that the same hand undoubtedly drew both. Believing therefore that the *Nice Valour* was Beaumont's only, and that he had at least the greatest share of the *Woman-Hater* and the *Knight*

lxxxviii COMMENDATORY POEMS.

But since it was thy hap to throw away
Much wit, for which the people did not pay,

of the Burning Pestle, I proceeded to other plays, and first to the Little French Lawyer, where La-writ runs *fighting-mad* just as Lazarillo had run *eating mad*, the Knight of the Burning Pestle, *romance-mad*; Chamont in the Nice Valour, *honour mad*, &c. This is what our old English writers often distinguish by the name of *humour*. The stile too of La-writ, like Lazarillo's and the Knight's, is often the *burlesque sublime*. Here I found the Prologue speaking of the *Authors* in the plural number, *i. e.* Beaumont and Fletcher. There is a good deal of the same *humour* in the Scornful Lady wrote by Beaumont and Fletcher, as all the quartos declare. The publishers of the General Dictionary, whose accuracy deserves the highest applause, have helped me to another play, the Martial Maid, in which Beaumont had a share, and Jonson's manner of characterising is very visible; an effeminate youth and a masculine young lady are both reformed by love, like Jonson's Every Man in his Humour, and Every Man out of his Humour. Wit without Money and the Custom of the Country which have Beaumont's name first in all the editions, have something of the same hand, particularly in Valentine's extravagant contempt of money, and do great honour to Beaumont, as both are excellent plays, and the first an incomparable one. Shirley supposes the Humorous Lieutenant to be one of the plays referred to by Beaumont's verses to Jonson, and the publisher of Beaumont's poems, which came out about five years after Shirley's folio of our Author's plays, has wrote under that poem the Maid in the Mill: This, I suppose, was a marginal note of somebody who believed Beaumont to have been a joint author in that play: It seems highly probable that he was so in both these plays, as the Lieutenant and Balthapha are both strong *caracatures* and much in Beaumont's *manner*. The False One mentions the Authors in the plural number, and I believe Beaumont chiefly drew the character of Septimius which gives name to the play; but whatever share he had in that play, it does him great honour. Cupid's Revenge, which all the editions ascribe to Beaumont and Fletcher, is only spoiled from being a very good tragedy by a ridiculous mixture of machinery; this play, the Noble Gentleman, and the Coxcomb, are all that remain which have any sort of external evidence which I know, of Beaumont's being a joint author, and these I build nothing upon. There are two others that partake of his manner, which for that reason only I suspect; the Spanish Curate, and the Laws of Candy; the latter of which extremely resembles the King and no King in its principal characters. But we need not rest upon mere conjectures, since Beaumont's share of the Maid's Tragedy, Philaster, and the King and no King, give him a full right to share equally with Fletcher the fame of a *tragic poet*; and Wit without Money, the Nice Valour, and the Little French Lawyer, raise his character equally high in comedy.

Seward.

Mr. Seward has been exceedingly elaborate in this disquisition; wherein, we apprehend, no one meets conviction, though the Writer seems to be himself so perfectly satisfied, both with the *internal* and *external*

COMMENDATORY POEMS. lxxxix

Because they saw it not, I not dislike
This second publication, which may strike

external evidence. With respect to the first, each Reader will judge for himself; in the second, he appears to be uncommonly erroneous.

Seward speaks of the first quarto of the Woman-Hater; the first quarto he never saw: He says, it was published several years after the death of *both Authors*; it was published in the life-time of *both*, in the year 1607. This copy is, indeed, very scarce; and had not Mr. Garrick's invaluable library been as easy, as most others are difficult, of access, a perusal of that edition would not, perhaps, have been obtained.

The first quarto was printed (as before observed) in 1607, without any Author's name prefixed, but in Mr. Garrick's copy has been wrote 'by John Fletcher,' through which name a pen has been run, and 'Francis Beaumont' wrote over the line; even this interlineation appears to be very old. The second quarto appeared in 1648, the title whereof mentions Fletcher singly; and the third in 1649, which has both names. The third, however, seems to be merely the second, with a new title-page, and the *additions* of the auxiliary title *The Hungry Courtier*, a drama, and D'Avenant's Prologue for the revival.

Great stress is also laid by Seward on the situation of Beaumont's Letter to Jonson; but this situation is evidently a mere casualty of the press. To expedite the printing, the first folio was divided into eight different portions, as the printer's directory letters for the book-binder, and the numeration of the pages, evince.

The plays allotted for the third portion were, Chances, Loyal Subject, Laws of Candy, Lovers' Progress, Island Princess, Humorous Lieutenant, and Nice Valour: These not making perfect sheets, the Editor, to avoid leaving a blank leaf in the body of the book, there inserted this Letter; and hence, undoubtedly, originated the situation of the Poem, which ought (did its title deserve attention) to have been placed at the end of the whole Work; for had any specification been intended, we should not have had the vague expression, '*two of the precedent*,' but '*the two precedent comedies*.'

Seward says, Shirley *supposes* the Humorous Lieutenant to be one of the plays referred to by the verses: Shirley thought nothing of the matter, knew nothing of the arrangement, did nothing but write the Preface: It were unjust to believe he did more.—It is not always easy to discover Seward's meaning; but he seems, however, to have distrusted Shirley's *supposition*, and to have relied on the subsequent Editor, by saying the verses were 'published at the end of the Nice Valour AND Woman-Hater, in the second folio.' This proves nothing; that Editor continued them with the play to which he found them annexed.

The title to these verses runs, 'Mr. Francis Beaumont's Letter to Ben. Jonson, written before he and Master Fletcher came to London, with two of the precedent comedies then not finished, which deferred their merry meetings at the Mermaid.' If this title and the situation afford proof of any kind, it will be directly opposite to
Seward's

Their consciences, to see the thing they scorn'd,
 'To be with so much wit and art adorn'd.
 Besides, one 'vantage more in this I see,
 Your censurers must have the quality
 Of reading, which I am afraid is more
 Than half your shrewdest judges had before. *Fr. Beaumont.*

II.

To the worthy Author Mr. JOHN FLETCHER, upon
 his Faithful Shepherdess.

THE wife, and many-headed *beuch*, that sits
 Upon the life and death of *plays*, and *wits*,
 (Compos'd of *gamester*, *captain*, *knight*, *knight's man*,
Lady, or *Pucelle*, that wears mask or fan,
Velvet, or *taffata* cap, rank'd in the dark
 With the shop's *foreman*, or some such *brave spark*,
 That may judge for his *six-pence*) had, before
 They saw it half, damn'd thy whole play; and, more,
 Their motives were, since it had not to do
 With vices, which they look'd for, and came to.

I, that am glad thy innocence was thy guilt,
 And wish that all the *musés'* blood were spilt
 In such a *martyrdom*, to vex their eyes,
 Do crown thy murder'd *poem*; which shall rise
 A glorified work to time, when fire,
 Or moths, shall eat what all these fools admire. *Ben. Jonson.*

Seward's opinion: First, as the title mentions 'two of *the precedent*
 'comedies,' the Woman-Hater could not be one, having no place
 in the first folio. Secondly, Seward says, 'Fletcher could not be
 'with Beaumont; but what says the title? 'Written before he AND
 'Master Fletcher came, &c.' And, thirdly, if Beaumont AND
 Fletcher were together, Nice Valour and the Humorous Lieutenant
 must be looked on as joint productions.

But, besides the title and situation failing to prove *which* the
 comedies were, the Poem itself affords no proof that Beaumont was
 then writing any play at all. The words

When these SCENES are PERFECT,

are all which can lead to such a supposition; and may we not under-
 stand those words to mean only, 'When I CHANGE the SCENE,' or,
 'when the time for my stay HERE is COMPLETED?' with this sense
 of the word *perfect* every Reader of old books must be acquainted.
 Whether this explanation is admitted, or not, it at least seems
 clear that no such *external* evidence as Seward supposes, is deducible
 from either the title or situation of the Poem in question. *J. N.*

III.

III.

To Mr. FRANCIS BEAUMONT, (then living.)

HOW I do love thee, Beaumont, and thy *musè*⁴,
That unto me dost such religion use !
How I do fear myself, that am not worth
The least indulgent thought thy pen drops forth !
At once thou mak'st me happy, and unmak'st :
And, giving largely to me, more thou tak'st.
What fate is mine, that so itself bereaves ?
What art is thine, that so thy friend deceives ?
When even there, where most thou praisest me
For writing better, I must envy thee. *Ben. Jonson.*

IV.

On Mr. FRANCIS BEAUMONT, on his Imitations of
Ovid, an Ode.

THE matchless lust of a fair poesy,
Which erst was buried in old Rome's decays,
Now 'gins with heat of rising majesty,
Her dust-wrapt head from rotten tomb to raise,
And with fresh splendor gilds her fearless crest,
Rearing her palace in our Poet's breast.
The wanton Ovid, whose enticing rimes
Have with attractive wonder forc'd attention,
No more shall be admir'd at ; for these times
Produce a poet, whose more rare invention
Will tear the love-sick myrtle from his brows,
T' adorn his temples with deserved boughs.
The strongest marble fears the smallest rain ;
The rusting canker eats the purest gold ;
Honour's best dye dreads envy's blackest stain ;
The crimson badge of beauty must wax old :
But this fair issue of thy fruitful brain,
Nor dreads age, envy, cank'ring rust or rain. *J. F.^s*

⁴ This short copy (which seems wrote with a sincerity not common in complimentary Poems) treats Beaumont not only as an excellent critic, but as an excellent poet ; and is an answer to Beaumont's Letter to Jonson. *Seward.*

⁵ The *J. F.* here is undoubtedly John Fletcher, and the Ode, though not immediately relating to the Plays, is inserted here, first, for

V.

On Mr. BEAUMONT.

(Written presently after his death.)

BEAUMONT lies here; and where now shall we have
A muse like his to sigh upon his grave?

Ah! none to weep this with a worthy tear,
But he, that cannot, Beaumont that lies here.
Who now shall pay thy tomb with such a verse
As thou that lady's didst, fair Rutland's hearse⁶?

for its intrinsic merit; and, secondly, as it will be pleasing to find that Fletcher's Muse was animated with friendship as well as Beaumont's; a circumstance, which, till I saw this Ode, seemed wanting to complete the amiable union which reigned between them. In the third stanza, the reader will see an authority for Milton's use of the word *rime* for verse in general,

'Things unattempted yet in prose or *rime*.'

Which Dr. Bentley so injudiciously altered to *prose and verse*. That Beaumont wrote something in the Ovidian *manner* seems evident from these lines; but the Hermaphrodite which is printed as his, and supposed to be the thing referred to in this Ode, is claimed by Cleveland as a conjunct performance between himself and Randolph.

Seward.

⁶ *Who now shall pay thy tomb with such a verse*

As thou that lady's didst, fair Rutland's hearse?] *To pay thy tomb* is a little obscure, but it seems to mean, *to repay thee for writing so excellent an Epitaph, by one as excellent on thyself*. There are several Epitaphs and Elegies in Beaumont's Poems, but by an expression in Mr. Earle's two next lines relating to the *marble of the tomb*, I believe the following beautiful Epitaph is what is here referred to:

AN EPITAPH.

- ' Here she lies, whose spotless fame
- ' Invites a stone to learn her name.
- ' The rigid Spartan that denied
- ' An Epitaph to all that died,
- ' Unless for war, in charity,
- ' Would here vouchsafe an elegy.
- ' She died a wife, but yet her mind,
- ' Beyond virginity refin'd,
- ' From lawless fire remain'd as free,
- ' As now from heat her ashes be.
- ' Her husband yet without a sin,
- ' Was not a stranger, but her kin;
- ' That her chaste love might seem no other
- ' To her husband than a brother.

' Keep

COMMENDATORY POEMS. xciii

A monument that will then lasting be,
 When all her marble is more dust than she.
 In thee all's lost : A sudden dearth and want
 Hath seiz'd on Wit, good epitaphs are scant ;
 We dare not write thy elegy, whilst each fears
 He ne'er shall match that copy of thy Tears.
 Scarce in an age a poet, and yet he
 Scarce lives the third part of his age to see ;
 But quickly taken off, and only known,
 Is in a minute shut as soon as shewn.
 Why should weak Nature tire herself in vain
 In such a piece, to dash it straight again ?
 Why should she take such work beyond her skill,
 Which, when she cannot perfect, she must kill ?
 Alas, what is't to temper slime or mire ?
 But Nature's puzzled, when she works in fire :
 Great brains (like brightest glass) crack straight, while those
 Of stone or wood hold out, and fear not blows :
 And we their ancient hoary heads can see,
 Whose wit was never their mortality :
 Beaumont dies young⁷, so Sidney died before ;
 There was not poetry he could live to more ;
 He could not grow up higher ; I scarce know,
 If th' art itself unto that pitch could grow,
 Were't not in thee, that hadst arriv'd the height
 Of all that Wit could reach, or Nature might.
 Oh, when I read those excellent things of thine,
 Such strength, such sweetness, couch'd in every line,
 Such life of fancy, such high choice of brain,
 Nought of the vulgar wit or borrow'd strain,
 Such passion, such expressions meet my eye,
 Such wit untainted with obscenity,

- ' Keep well this pawn, thou marble chest,
- ' Till it be call'd for, let it rest ;
- ' For while this jewel here is set,
- ' The grave is like a cabinet.'

This is extremely in the spirit of Milton and Shakespeare's Epitaphs, and shews that Beaumont excelled in every species of writing which he attempted. There are three Elegies of his which I believe genuine, and they have great merit ; two are signed by his name, and another begins,

- ' Can my poor lines no better office have,
- ' Than, screech-owl like, still dwell about the grave ?'

This shews that he had wrote several Elegies and Epitaphs. *Seward.*

⁷ So Sidney did before ;] It might perhaps have been—so Sidney died before. *Seward.*

Beaumont's Poems exhibit *died.*

An

xciv COMMENDATORY POEMS.

And these so unaffectedly express'd,
 All in a language purely-flowing drest;
 And all so born within thyself, thine own,
 So new, so fresh, so nothing trod upon,
 I grieve not now, that old Menander's vein
 Is ruin'd, to survive in thee again;
 Such in his time was he, of the same piece,
 The smooth, ev'n, natural wit, and love of Greece.
 Those few sententious fragments shew more worth,
 Than all the poets Athens e'er brought forth;
 And I am sorry we have lost those hours
 On them, whose quickness comes far short of ours,
 And dwell not more on thee, whose every page
 May be a pattern for their scene and stage.
 I will not yield thy works so mean a praise;
 More pure, more chaste, more fainted than are plays,
 Nor with that dull supineness to be read,
 To pass a fire, or laugh an hour in bed.
 How do the muses suffer every where,
 Taken in such mouths' censure, in such ears,
 That, 'twixt a whiff, a line or two rehearse,
 And with their rheum together spawl a verse!
 This all a poem's leisure, after play³,
 Drink, or tobacco, it may keep the day.
 Whilst ev'n their very idleness, they think,
 Is lost in these, that lose their time in drink.

³ *This all a poem's leisure after play,*

Drink or tobacco, it may keep the day.] What is *all a poem's leisure*? I can affix no idea to it but a Latinism, which if designed is extremely forced. *This is all a poem's*, i. e. a poem's part, power or worth, it may serve to spend one's leisure hours after dice, drink, or tobacco. But unless the reader sees a more natural explication, I believe he will agree to its being discarded as a corruption, for a trifling change will give a clear sense,

This all a poem's pleasure, after play,

Drink or tobacco, it may keep the day.

i. e. All the pleasure a poem gives to these sons of dulness, is to spin out or pass away the time till sun-set, after cards, bottles, and tobacco are removed; thus to *pass a fire*, a little above, signifies to pass away the time till the fire is burnt out. But to *keep a day*, is an expression not very applicable to this sense, (a sense which the context evidently requires) and though it may indeed be strained to something like it, yet as we can retain three of the letters in *keep*, and by a small transposition of the rest, give a much properer verb, it seems probable that *eke* was the original, we generally now say to *eke out the day*; but it was used by our ancestors without the adverb, *to eke a thing*, i. e.

Pity their dullness; we that better know,
Will a more serious hour on thee bestow?
Why should not Beaumont in the morning please,
As well as Plautus, Aristophanes?
Who, if my pen may as my thoughts be free,
Were scurril wits and buffoons both to thee;
Yet these our learned of severest brow
Will deign to look on, and to note them too,
That will defy our own; 'tis English stuff,
And th' author is not rotten long enough.
Alas, what phlegm are they, compar'd to thee,
In thy Philaster, and Maid's Tragedy?
Where's such an humour as thy Bessus, pray?
Let them put all their Thrafoes in one play,
He shall out-bid them; their conceit was poor¹⁰,
All in a circle of a bawd or whore,
A cox'ning Davus¹¹; take the fool away,
And not a good jest extant in a play.
Yet these are wits, because they're old, and now,
Being Greek and Latin, they are learning too:

to protract or lengthen it out. The reader will see a much greater corruption of the press than either of these at the latter end of this Poem.

Seward.

The meaning seems to be, 'They have no *leisure* for poetry, till 'they have done with gaming, drinking, and smoking; these having 'had their time, poetry may *command* the day.'

⁹ *Pity then dull we, we that better know,*

Will a more serious hour on thee bestow.] There is too much inconsistency in this sentence to suppose it genuine. He ironically calls himself and friends *dull*, and literally asserts their superior understanding in the same sentence. Beside, *Pity then we will bestow*, &c. does not seem English. I change but an *n* to an *m*, and read, *Pity them dull; We, we that*, &c.

Seward.

The text is from Beaumont's Poems.

¹⁰ *Their conceit was poor*, &c.] Mr. Earle's reflections on Terence are in part at least very unjust. There is perhaps too much sameness in his plots; but his old men and young, his servants, his parasites, &c. are each a distinct character from all the rest, and preserved throughout each play with infinite spirit and judgment. Beside which, the elegant diction and fine sentiments which every where abound in him are patterns to the best comic writers; and which Beaumont and Fletcher strive to excel him in by adding sublimity of poetry to justness of sentiment; well knowing that *jest*s and *drollery* are only the lowest degree of comic excellence.

Seward.

¹¹ *A cox'ning dance.*] Corrected by Theobald, who says, 'Davus 'is the name of a subtle juggling servant in Terence's comedy called 'the Fair Andrian.'

But

xcvi COMMENDATORY POEMS.

But those their own times were content t' allow
A thriftier fame¹², and thine is lowest now.
But thou shalt live, and, when thy name is grown
Six ages older, shalt be better known ;
When thou'rt of Chaucer's standing in the tomb,
Thou shalt not share, but take up all, his room*.

*Joh. Earle*¹³.

VI.

ON MR. FRANCIS BEAUMONT, (then newly dead.)

HE that hath such acuteness, and such wit,
As would ask ten good heads to husband it ;
He, that can write so well, that no man dare
Refuse it for the best, let him beware :

Beaumont is dead, by whose sole death appears,
Wit's a disease consumes men in few years.

*Rich. Corbet*¹⁴. D. D.

¹² *A thirsty fame*.] To make *thirsty* signify poor or scanty may be admitted ; but as the smallest change gives a more natural word, *thrift* seems the original.

Seward.

The text from Beaumont's Poems.

* This copy varies considerably from that printed with Beaumont's Poems.

¹³ *Joh. Earle*.] Mr. Earle was young when he wrote this, and there are indisputable marks of a bright poetic genius, which had probably been greatly inspired by an intimacy with Beaumont. He was in high repute as a *preacher* and a *scholar* in King Charles the First's reign ; and seems to have been a true patriot ; for it is probable that he opposed the court in the beginning of the troubles, as he was elected one of the *Assembly of Divines* ; but he refused to act with them, and adhered to the king in his lowest state, and for it was deprived of the chancellorship of Salisbury, and all his other preferments. After the restoration, he was made, first Dean of Westminster, then Bishop of Worcester, and afterwards of Salisbury. Mr. Wood gives a character of him, that extremely resembles that of the excellent Dr. Hough, the late Bishop of Worcester ; the sum of it is, that he joined the politeness of a courtier to the sanctity, goodness, and charity of an apostle.

Seward.

¹⁴ Richard Corbet, first Student, then Dean of Christ-Church, afterwards Bishop of Oxford, and from thence translated to Norwich ; in his youth was eminent for wit and poetry, of which this is a specimen, and a good testimony of Beaumont's having a luxuriant wit as well as Fletcher,

————— a wit
That would ask ten good heads to husband it. *Seward.*

VII.

VII.

On the happy Collection of Mr. FLETCHER's Works,
never before printed.

FLETCHER, arise! usurpers share thy bays,
They *canton* thy vast wit to build small *plays*:
He comes! his *volume* breaks thro' clouds and dust;
Down, little wits! ye must refund, ye must.

Nor comes he private; here's great Beaumont too:
How could one single world encompass two?
For these co-heirs had equal power to teach
All that all wits both can, and cannot, reach.
Shakespeare was early up, and went so drest
As for those *dawning* hours he knew was best;
But, when the sun shone forth, *you two* thought fit
To wear just robes, and leave off *trunk-hose* wit.
Now, now, 'twas perfect; none must look for new,
Manners and scenes may alter, but not *you*;
For yours are not mere *humours*, gilded strains;
The fashion lost, your massy *sense* remains.

Some think your wits of two complexions fram'd,
That one the *sock*, th' other the *buskin*, claim'd;
That should the stage *embattle* all its force,
Fletcher would lead the foot, Beaumont the horse.
But, you were both for both; not semi-wits,
Each piece is wholly two, yet never splits:
Ye're not two *faculties*, and one *soul* still,
He th' *understanding*, thou the quick free *will*;
Not as two *voices* in one song embrace,
Fletcher's keen *treble*, and deep Beaumont's *bass*¹⁵,

¹⁵ But, as two voices in one song embrace,
(Fletcher's keen treble, and deep Beaumont's bass)

Two, full, congenial souls.] Here Berkenhead is speaking of the doubtful opinions relating to the share which Beaumont and Fletcher had in these Plays: He tells you, that the general opinion was, that Beaumont was a *grave tragic writer*, Fletcher most excellent in comedy. This he contradicts; but how, why, they did not differ as a general of horse does from a general of foot, nor as the *sock* does from the *buskin*, nor as the *will* from the *understanding*, but were *two full congenial souls*, and differed only as the *bass* and *treble* do in the same song. Why, if this is the true reading, he confirms in these lines what he had contradicted in all the foregoing similes, for *bass* and *treble* have much the same difference between them as horse and foot in an army, or the wit and understanding in the soul.

xcvi COMMENDATORY POEMS.

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xcviii COMMENDATORY POEMS.

Two, full, congenial souls; still both prevail'd;
His muse and thine were *quarter'd*, not *impal'd*¹⁶:
Both brought your ingots, both toil'd at the mint,
Beat, melted, sifted, 'till no dross stuck in't;
Then in each other's scales weigh'd every grain,
Then smooth'd and burnish'd, then weigh'd all again;
Stamp't both your names upon't at one bold hit,
Then, then 'twas coin, as well as bulkion-wit.

Thus twins: But as when Fate one eye deprives,
That other strives to double, which survives,
So Beaumont died; yet left in legacy
His rules and standard wit (Fletcher) to thee.
Still the same planet, tho' not fill'd so soon,
A two-horn'd *crescent* then, now one *full-moon*.
Joint *love* before, now *honour*, doth provoke;
So th' old twin *giants* forcing a huge oak,
One slip'd his footing, th' other sees him fall,
Grasp'd the whole tree, and single held up all.
Imperial Fletcher! here begins thy reign;
Scenes flow like sun-beams from thy glorious brain;
'Thy swift-dispatching soul no more doth stay,
Than he that built two cities in one day;
Ever brim-full, and sometimes running o'er,
To feed poor languid wits that wait at door;
Who creep and creep, yet ne'er above-ground stood;
(For creatures have most feet, which have least blood)
But thou art still that *bird of paradise*,
Which hath *no feet*, and ever nobly *flies*:
Rich, lusty sense, such as the *Poet* ought;
For poems, if not excellent, are naught;

To make the writer consistent with himself, the true reading seems to be *not* instead of *but*:

*Not as two voices in one song embrace,
Fletcher's keen treble and deep Beaumont's base;
Two full congenial souls.*

Seward.

¹⁶ *His muse and thine were quarter'd, not impal'd;*] I know I am going out of my depth, in attempting a criticism on terms in heraldry. But my books tell me, that *impaling* is when the arms of the man and wife are placed on the same escutcheon, the one on the right and the other on the left; which is a proper emblem of the matrimonial union; and might seemingly be as well applied to the marriage of Beaumont and Fletcher's wit, as the word *quartering* can, which the same Berkenhead speaks of at the latter end of this Poem:

*What strange production is at last display'd,
Got by two fathers without female aid!*

But I shall attempt no change in a *science* where I am ignorance itself.

Seward.

Low

COMMENDATORY POEMS. xcix

Low wit in scenes in state a peasant goes;
 If mean and flat, let it foot yeoman-prose,
 That such may spell, as are not readers grown;
 To whom he, that writes wit, shews he hath none.

Brave Shakespeare flow'd, yet had his ebbings too,
 Often above himself, sometimes below;
 Thou always best; if aught seem'd to decline,
 'Twas the unjudging rout's mistake, not thine:
 Thus thy fair Shepherdess, which the bold heap
 (False to themselves and thee) did prize so cheap,
 Was found (when understood) fit to be crown'd;
 At worst 'twas worth *two hundred thousand pound*.

Some blast thy *works*, lest we should track their walk,
 Where they steal all those few good things they talk;
 Wit-burglary must chide those it feeds on,
 For plunder'd folks ought to be rail'd upon;
 But (as stoln goods go off at half their worth)
 Thy strong sense *palls*, when they purloin it forth.
 When didst *thou* borrow? where's the man e'er read
 Aught begg'd by *thee* from those alive or dead?
 Or from dry *goddeses*? as some who, when
 They stuff their page with gods, write worse than men;
 Thou wast thine *own* muse, and hadst such vast odds,
 Thou out-writ'st him whose verse *made* all those *gods*:
 Surpassing those our dwarfish age up-rears,
 As much as Greeks, or Latins, thee in years:
 Thy ocean fancy knew nor banks nor damms;
 We ebb down dry to pebble-*anagrams*;
 Dead and insipid, all despairing fit;
 Lost to behold this great *relapse* of wit:
 What strength remains, is like that (wild and fierce)
 'Till Jonson made good poets and right verse.

Such boist'rous trifles thy muse would not brook,
 Save when she'd shew how scurvily they look;
 No savage metaphors (things rudely great)
 Thou dost *display*, not *butcher* a conceit;
 Thy nerves have *beauty*, which invades and charms;
 Looks like a princess harness'd in bright arms.

Nor art thou loud and cloudy; those, that do
 Thunder so much, do't without lightning too;
 Tearing themselves, and almost split their brain
 To render harsh what thou speak'st free and clean;
 Such gloomy sense may pass for *high* and *proud*,
 But true-born wit still flies *above* the *cloud*;
 Thou knew'st 'twas *impotence*, what they call *height*;
 Who blusters strong i'th' dark, but *creeps* i'th' light.

And as thy thoughts were *clear*, so, *innocent*;
 Thy fancy gave no unswept language vent;
 Slander'ft not *laws*, prophan'ft no *holy page*
 (As if thy father's crozier aw'd the stage);
 High crimes were still arraign'd; tho' they made shift
 To prosper out *four acts*, were plagu'd i'th' *fifth*:
 All's safe, and wise; no stiff affected scene,
 Nor *swoln*, nor *flat*, a true full natural vein;
 Thy sense (like well-drest ladies) cloath'd as skinn'd,
 Not all unlac'd, nor city-starch'd and pinn'd?
 Thou hadst no sloth, no rage, no sullen fit,
 But *strength* and *mirth*; Fletcher's a *sanguine* wit.

Thus, two great *consul*-poets all things sway'd,
 'Till all was English born or English made:
Mitre and *coif* here into one piece spun,
 Beaumont a *judge's*, this a *prelate's* son.
 What strange production is at last display'd,
 Got by two fathers, without female aid!
 Behold, two *masculines* espous'd each other;
Wit and the world were born without a *mother*.

J. Berkenhead¹⁷.

VIII.

On the Works of BEAUMONT and FLETCHER, now
 at length printed.

GREAT pair of Authors, whom one equal star
 Begot so like in *genius*, that you are
 In fame, as well as writings, both so knit,
 That no man knows where to divide your wit,
 Much less your praise: You, who had equal fire,
 And did each other mutually inspire;
 Whether one did contrive, the other write,
 Or one fram'd the plot, the other did indite;
 Whether one found the matter, th' other dress,
 Or th' one dispos'd what th' other did express:
 Where-e'er your parts between yourselves lay, we
 In all things, which you did, but one thread see;
 So evenly drawn out, so gently spun,
 That Art with Nature ne'er did smoother run.

¹⁷ J. Berkinhead.] Berkinhead was first amanuensis to bishop Laud, and fellow of All Souls. He was author of the *Mercurius Aulicus*, a very loyal paper in the time of the rebellion. He was persecuted much in Cromwell's days, and lived by his wits; afterwards he had good places under King Charles the Second, was member of parliament, and knighted.

Seward.

Where

Where shall I fix my praise then? or what part
 Of all your numerous labours hath desert
 More to be fam'd than other? Shall I say,
 I've met a lover so drawn in your play,
 So passionately written, so inflam'd,
 So jealously enrag'd, then gently tam'd,
 That I in reading have the person seen,
 And your pen hath part stage and actor been?
 Or shall I say, that I can scarce forbear
 To clap, when I a * captain do meet there; [* *Beffus*;
 So lively in his own vain humour drest,
 So braggingly, and like himself exprest,
 That modern cowards, when they saw him play'd,
 Saw, blush'd, departed, guilty and betray'd?
 You wrote all parts right; whatsoe'er the stage
 Had from you, was seen there as in the age,
 And had their equal life: Vices which were
 Manners abroad, did grow corrected there:
 They who possess a box, and half-crown spent
 To learn obsceneness, return'd innocent,
 And thank'd you for this coz'nage, whose chaste scene
 Taught loves so noble, so reform'd, so clean,
 That they, who brought foul fires, and thither came
 To bargain, went thence with a holy flame.
 Be't to your praise too, that ¹⁸ your stock and vein
 Held both to tragic and to comic strain;
 Where-e'er you list'd to be high and grave,
 No *buskin* shew'd more solemn; no quill gave
 Such feeling objects to draw tears from eyes,
 Spectators fate parts in your tragedies.
 And where you list'd to be low and free,
 Mirth turn'd the whole house into comedy;
 So piercing (where you pleas'd) hitting a fault,
 That humours from your pen issued all salt.
 Nor were you thus in works and poems knit,
 As to be but two halves, and make one Wit;
 But as some things, we see, have double cause,
 And yet the effect itself from both whole draws;
 So, though you were thus twist'd and combin'd,
 As in two bodies t' have but one fair mind ¹⁹,

¹⁸ ——— your stock and vein

Held both to tragic and to comic strain.] i. e. Your *stock* of understanding and knowledge, and your *vein* of wit and humour, are equally excellent in tragedy and comedy. *Seward.*

¹⁹ *As two bodies to have but one fair mind.*] Amended by Seward.

cii COMMENDATORY POEMS.

Yet if we praise you rightly, we must say,
Both join'd, and both did wholly make the play.
For that you could write singly, we may guess
By the divided pieces which the press
Hath severally sent forth²⁰; nor were join'd so,
Like some our modern authors, made to go
One merely by the help of th' other²¹, who
To purchase fame do come forth one of two;
Nor wrote you so, that one's part was to lick
The other into shape; nor did one flick
The other's cold inventions with such wit,
As serv'd, like spice, to make them quick and fit;
Nor, out of mutual want, or emptiness,
Did you conspire to go still twins to th' press;
But what, thus join'd, you wrote, might have come forth
As good from each, and stor'd with the same worth
That thus united them: You did join sense;
In you 'twas league, in others impotence;
And the press, which both thus amongst us sends²²,
Sends us one poet in a pair of friends. *Jasper Maine*²³.

²⁰ *By the divided pieces which the press*

Hath severally sent forth.] I have before shewed that there were two comedies wrote by Beaumont singly, and given some reasons why the Nice Valour ought to be deemed one of them. Whether Mr. Maine in this place referred to these two comedies, knowing which they were; or whether he only meant the mask at Gray's-Inn, which was the only piece which we know to have been published in Beaumont's name before these Commendatory Poems were published; or whether he spoke in general terms, without a strict adherence to facts, must be left uncertain. *Seward.*

²¹ *nor were gone so,*

Like some our modern authors made to go

On merely by the help of th' other.] The word *go* which ends the next line, seems to have ran in the printer's head, and made him put *gone* here instead of some other word. Mr. Theobald had prevented me in the emendation: We read *join'd so*, and as I have his concurrence, I have the less doubt in preferring it to Mr. Sympson's conjecture — *Nor were one so* — tho' this latter is very good sense, and nearer the trace of the letters, but it would make *one* be repeated too often, for it is already in the third and fourth lines after, and 'tis very evident to me that it should have been in the second, for *On merely*, I read *One merely*. *Seward.*

²² *And the press which both thus amongst us sends.*] To make this verse run smoother, Seward would read,

And thus the press which both amongst us sends,
and refers to his rule for verse in note 4 on Wit without Money.

²³ *Jasper Maine.*] This gentleman was author of the City Match, a comedy, and the Amorous War, a tragi-comedy. He was an eminent

IX.

Upon the report of the printing of the Dramatical Poems of Master JOHN FLETCHER, never collected before, and now set forth in one volume.

THO' when all Fletcher writ, and the entire Man was indulg'd unto that sacred fire,
His thoughts, and his thoughts' drefs, appear'd both such,
'That 'twas his happy fault to do too much:
Who therefore wisely did submit each birth
'To knowing Beaumont ere it did come forth,
Working again until he said, 'twas fit,
And made him the sobriety of his wit.
Tho' thus he call'd his judge into his fame,
And for that aid allow'd him half the name;
'Tis known, that sometimes he did stand alone,
That both the sponge and pencil were his own;
That himself judg'd himself, could singly do,
And was at last Beaumont and Fletcher too:

Else we had lost his *Shepherdes*²⁴, a piece
Even and smooth, spun from a finer fleece;
Where softness reigns, where passions passions greet,
Gentle and high, as floods of balsam meet.
Where dress'd in white expressions sit bright loves,
Drawn, like their fairest queen, by milky doves;

eminent preacher in the civil war, but warmly adhering to the king, was deprived of all his preferments in Cromwell's time, and taken for charity into the earl of Devonshire's family, where his learning, piety, and wit, rendered him a proper advocate for religion against the famous Mr. Hobbs, then a tutor in that family. After the restoration he was made canon of Christ-Church, and archdeacon of Chichester.

Seward.

²⁴ *Else we had lost his Shepherdes.*] Mr. Cartwright was a very bright but a very young man, and seems to taste our Authors plays extremely well, but to have known nothing of their dates and history. He supposes the *Shepherdes* wrote after Beaumont's death, so that his testimony ought to have no sort of weight in excluding Beaumont from all share in the composition of the plays. He had taken up the supposition of Beaumont's being only a corrector, perhaps merely because Jonson had celebrated his judgment; not considering that he celebrated his fancy too.

Seward.

Cartwright could not suppose the *Shepherdes* was wrote after Beaumont's death: His words only mean, 'If Fletcher could not have wrote without Beaumont, we should not have had the Faithful *Shepherdes*,' in which the latter had no concern.

civ COMMENDATORY POEMS.

A piece, which Jonson in a rapture bid
Come up a glorified work ; and so it did.

Else had his muse set with his friend ; the stage
Had miss'd those poems, which yet take the age ;
The world had lost those rich exemplars, where
Art, language, wit, sit ruling in one sphere ;
Where the fresh matters soar above old themes,
As prophets' raptures do above our dreams ;
Where in a worthy scorn he dares refuse
All other gods, and makes the thing his muse ;
Where he calls passions up, and lays them so,
As spirits, aw'd by him to come and go ;
Where the free author did whate'er he would,
And nothing will'd but what a poet should.

No vast uncivil bulk swells any scene,
The strength's ingenious, and the vigour clean ;
None can prevent the fancy, and see through
At the first opening ; all stand wondring how
The thing will be, until it is ; which thence
With fresh delight still cheats, still takes the sense ;
The whole design, the shadows, the lights such,
That none can say he shews or hides too much :
Business grows up, ripen'd by just encrease,
And by as just degrees again doth cease ;
The heats and minutes of affairs are watch'd,
And the nice points of time are met, and snatch'd :
Nought later than it should, nought comes before ;
Chymists, and calculators, do err more :
Sex, age, degree, affections, country, place,
The inward substance, and the outward face,
All kept precisely, all exactly fit ;
What he would write, he was, before he writ.
'Twixt Jonson's grave, and Shakespeare's lighter sound,
His muse so steer'd, that something still was found
Nor this, nor that, nor both, but so his own,
'That 'twas his mark, and he was by it known :
Hence did he take true judgments, hence did strike
All palates some way, though not all alike :
'The god of numbers might his numbers crown,
And, listning to them, wish they were his own.
Thus, welcome forth, what ease, or wine, or wit
Durst yet produce ; that is, what Fletcher writ !

X.

A N O T H E R.

FLETCHER, tho' some call it thy fault, that wit
 So overflow'd thy scenes, that ere 'twas fit
 To come upon the stage, Beaumont was fain
 To bid thee be more dull; that's, write again,
 And bate some of thy fire; which from thee came
 In a clear, bright, full, but too large a flame;
 And after all (finding thy genius such)
 That blunted, and allay'd, 'twas yet too much,
 Added his sober sponge; and did contract
 Thy plenty to less wit, to make't exact:
 Yet we through his corrections could see
 Much treasure in thy superfluity;
 Which was so fil'd away, as, when we do
 Cut jewels, that that's lost is jewel too;
 Or as men use to wash gold, which we know
 By losing makes the stream thence wealthy grow.
 They who do on thy works severely sit,
 And call thy store the over-births of wit,
 Say thy miscarriages were rare, and when
 Thou wert superfluous, that thy fruitful pen
 Had no fault but abundance, which did lay
 Out in one scene what might well serve a play;
 And hence do grant, that, what they call excess,
 Was to be reckon'd as thy happiness,
 From whom wit issued in a full spring-tide;
 Much did enrich the stage, much flow'd beside.
 For that thou couldst thine own free fancy bind
 In stricter numbers, and run so confin'd
 As to observe the rules of art, which sway
 In the contrivance of a true-born play,
 Those works proclaim which thou didst write retir'd
 From Beaumont, by none but thyself inspir'd.
 Where, we see, 'twas not chance that made them hit,
 Nor were thy plays the lotteries of wit;
 But, like to Durer's pencil²⁵, which first knew
 The laws of faces, and then faces drew,

²⁵ *Like to Durer's pencil.*] Albert Durer was a most excellent German painter (born in 1471), much admired even by the great Raphael himself; and in so high esteem with the emperor Maximilian the First, that he presented him with a coat of arms as the badge of nobility.

Theobald.

Thou

cvi COMMENDATORY POEMS.

Thou knew'st the air, the colour, and the place,
 The symmetry, which gives a poem grace.
 Parts are so fitted unto parts, as do
 Shew thou hadst wit, and mathematics too:
 Knew'st where by line to spare, where to dispense,
 And didst beget just comedies from thence:
 Things unto which thou didst such life bequeath,
 That they, (their own Black-Friars²⁶) unacted, breath.
 Jonson hath writ things lasting, and divine,
 Yet his love-scenes, Fletcher, compar'd to thine,
 Are cold and frosty, and expresse love so,
 As heat with ice, or warm fires mix'd with snow;
 Thou, as if struck with the same generous darts,
 Which burn, and reign, in noble lovers' hearts,
 Hast cloath'd affections in such native tires,
 And so describ'd them in their own true fires,
 Such moving sighs, such undissembled tears,
 Such charms of language, such hopes mix'd with fears,
 Such grants after denials, such pursuits
 After despair, such amorous recruits,
 That some, who sat spectators, have confess'd
 Themselves transform'd to what they saw exprest:
 And felt such shafts steal through their captiv'd sense,
 As made them rise parts, and go lovers thence.
 Nor was thy stile wholly compos'd of groves,
 Or the soft strains of shepherds and their loves;
 When thou wouldst comic be, each smiling birth,
 In that kind, came into the world all mirth,
 All point, all edge, all sharpness; we did sit
 Sometimes five acts out in pure sprightly wit,
 Which flow'd in such true salt, that we did doubt
 In which scene we laugh'd most two shillings out.
 Shakespeare to thee was dull²⁷, whose best jest lies
 I'th' ladies' questions, and the fools' replies,

²⁶ *That they, (their own Black-Friars.)* i. e. their own theatre: meaning, that Fletcher's plays were so sprightly, that, tho' then unacted (by reason of the troublesome times, and civil war which raged against king Charles the First) they wanted no advantage of a stage to set them off. One of the seven playhouses, subsisting in our Author's time, was in Black-Friars. *Theobald.*

²⁷ *Shakespeare to thee was dull.*] This false censure arose from the usual fault of panegirists, of depreciating others to extol their favourite. Had he only said, as in the former copy, that Fletcher was in a due medium between Jonson's correctness and Shakespeare's fancy, he had done Fletcher as well as himself more real honour. But it must be observed, that Beaumont and Fletcher were so much the general

COMMENDATORY POEMS. cvii

Old-fashion'd wit, which walk'd from town to town
 In trunk-hose²⁸, which our fathers call'd the clown;
 Whose wit our nice times would obsceneness call,
 And which made bawdry pass for comical.
 Nature was all his art; thy vein was free
 As his, but without his scurrility;
 From whom mirth came unforc'd, no jest perplex'd,
 But without labour clean, chaste, and unvex'd.
 Thou wert not like some, our small poets, who
 Could not be poets, were not we poets too;
 Whose wit is pilf'ring, and whose vein and wealth
 In poetry lies merely in their stealth;
 Nor didst thou feel their drought, their pangs, their qualms,
 Their rack in writing, who do write for alms;
 Whose wretched genius, and dependent fires,
 But to their benefactors' dole aspires.
 Nor hadst thou the sly trick thyself to praise
 Under thy friends' names; or, to purchase bays,
 Didst write stale commendations to thy book,
 Which we for Beaumont's or Ben Jonson's took:
 That debt thou left'st to us, which none but he
 Can truly pay, Fletcher, who writes like thee.

*William Cartwright*²⁹.

neral taste of the age, both in Charles the First and Second's reign, that Mr. Cartwright only follows the common judgment. The reason seems to be this, Jonson survived both Shakespeare and our Authors many years, and as he warmly opposed the strange irregularities of the English theatre, at the head of which irregularities was so great a genius as Shakespeare, he formed a strong party against him. But Nature frequently spoke in Shakespeare so directly to the heart, and his excellencies as well as faults were so glaring, that the prejudices against the latter could not wholly blind men to the former. As our Authors resembled him in these excellencies more than Jonson, and yet often followed Jonson's correctness and manner, the partisans both of Shakespeare and Jonson were willing to compromise it, and allow them the first honours, as partaking of both their excellencies. After the restoration, French rules of the drama were introduced, and our Authors being nearer them than Shakespeare, they still held their superiority.

Seward.

²⁸ *In turn'd hose.*] We must read, *trunk-hose*; i. e. a kind of large slops, or trowzers, worn by the clowns. So in the 25th copy of verses;

————— *You two thought fit*

To wear just robes, and leave off trunk-hose wit. Theobald.

²⁹ *William Cartwright.*] Mr. Cartwright was esteemed one of the best poets, orators, and philosophers of his age; he was first a king's scholar at Westminster, then student of Christ-Church, Oxon. Wood calls

XI.

To the Manes of the celebrated Poets and Fellow-writers, FRANCIS BEAUMONT and JOHN FLETCHER, upon the printing of their excellent Dramatic Poems.

DISDAIN not, gentle shades, the lowly praise
Which here I tender your immortal bays :
Call it not folly, but my zeal, that I
Strive to eternize you, that cannot die.
And though no language rightly can commend
What you have writ, save what yourselves have penn'd ;
Yet let me wonder at those curious strains
(The rich conceptions of your twin like brains)
Which drew the gods' attention ; who admir'd
To see our English stage by you inspir'd :
Whose chiming muses never fail'd to sing
A soul-affecting music, ravishing
Both ear and intellect ; while you do each
Contend with other who shall highest reach
In rare invention ; conflicts, that beget
New strange delight, to see two fancies met,
That could receive no foil ; two wits in growth
So just, as had one soul informed both.
Thence (learned Fletcher) sung the muse alone,
As both had done before, thy Beaumont gone.
In whom, as thou, had he out-liv'd, so he
(Snatch'd first away) survived still in thee.
What tho' distempers of the present age
Have banish'd your smooth numbers from the stage ?
You shall be gainers by't ; it shall confer
To th' making the vast world your theatre ;
The prefs shall give to every man his part,
And we will all be actors ; learn by heart
Those tragic scenes and comic strains you writ,
Unimitable both for art and wit ;

calls him the most seraphical preacher of his age, another Tully and another Virgil : He died about the age of thirty in 1643, in the year of his proctorship, when King Charles the First was at Oxford, by whom his death was most affectionately mourned. He wrote the *Lady Errant*, the *Royal Slave*, and *Love's Convert*, tragi comedies ; and a volume of his Poems were printed after his death. See Wood's *Athenæ*. *Seward.*

Cartwright's best play, the *Ordinary*, Mr. Seward has not mentioned.
And

COMMENDATORY POEMS. cix

And, at each *exit*, as your fancies rise,
Our hands shall clap deserved plaudities.

*John Webb*³⁰.

XII.

On the Works of the most excellent Dramatic Poet,
Mr. JOHN FLETCHER, never before printed.

HAIL, Fletcher! welcome to the world's great stage;
For our two hours, we have thee here an age
In thy whole works, and may th' *impression* call
The *pretor* that presents thy plays to all;
Both to the people, and the *lords* that sway
That *herd*, and ladies whom those *lords* obey.
And what's the loadstone can such guests invite
But moves on two poles, *profit* and *delight*?
Which will be soon, as on the rack, confest,
When every one is tickled with a jest,
And that pure Fletcher's able to subdue
A *melancholy* more than Burton knew³¹.
And, tho' upon the bye to his designs,
The *native* may learn English from his lines,
And th' *alien*, if he can but construe it,
May here be made free *denison* of wit.
But his main end does drooping *Virtue* raise,
And crowns her beauty with eternal *bays*;
In scenes where she inflames the frozen soul,
While *Vice* (her paint wash'd off) appears so foul,
She must this *blest isle* and Europe leave,
And some new *quadrant* of the *globe* deceive;
Or hide her blushes on the Afric shore,
Like Marius, but ne'er rise to *triumph* more;

³⁰ *John Webb*.] I find no other traces of a John Webb who was likely to be author of this ingenious copy of verses, but that in 1629, four years after Fletcher's death, one John Webb, M. A. and fellow of Magdalene College in Oxford, was made master of Croydon School. He was probably our Mr. Webb, and much nearer the times of our Authors than Mr. Cartwright, and had I discovered this soon enough, he should have took place of him; but his testimony of Beaumont's abilities, as a writer, is a proper antidote against Mr. Cartwright's traditional opinion. *Seward*.

³¹ *And that pure Fletcher, able to subdue
A melancholy more than Burton knew.*] Mr. Sympsen observed that the comma stood in the place of 's, *Fletcher is able*. Burton was author of the *Anatomy of Melancholy*, a folio. *Seward*.

That

cx COMMENDATORY POEMS.

That *honour* is resign'd to Fletcher's fame ;
 Add to his trophies, that a *poet's* name
 (Late grown as odious to our *modern states*,
 As that of *King* to Rome) he vindicates
 From black aspersions, cast upon't by those
 Which only are inspir'd to lie in prose.

And, *by the court of muses be't decreed*,
 What graces spring from poesy's richer seed,
 When we name Fletcher, shall be so proclaim'd,
 As all, that's *royal*, is when Cæsar's nam'd.

Robert Stapylton ³², Knt.

XIII.

To the Memory of my most honoured Kinsman,
 Mr. FRANCIS BAUMONT.

I'LL not pronounce how strong and clean thou writ'st,
 Nor by what new hard rules thou took'st thy flights,
 Nor how much Greek and Latin some refine,
 Before they can make up six words of thine ;
 But this I'll say, thou strik'st our sense so deep,
 At once thou mak'st us blush, rejoice and weep.
 Great father Jonson bow'd himself, when he
 (Thou writ'st so nobly) vow'd, *he envied thee*.
 Were thy Mardonius arm'd ; there would be more
 Strife for his sword than all Achilles wore ;
 Such wise just rage, had he been lately tried,
 My life on't he had been o'th' better side ;
 And, where he found false odds, (thro' gold or sloth)
 There brave Mardonius would have beat them both.

Behold, here's Fletcher too ! the world ne'er knew
 Two potent wits co-operate, till you ;
 For still your fancies are so wov'n and knit,
 'Twas *Francis* Fletcher, or *John* Beaumont writ,
 Yet neither borrow'd, nor were so put to't
 To call poor gods and goddesses to do't ;
 Nor made nine girls your *musés* (you suppose,
 Women ne'er write, save *love-letters in prose*)

³² Sir Robert Stapylton of Carelton in Yorkshire, a poet of much fame, was at the battle of Edgehill with king Charles the First, and had an honorary degree given him at Oxford for his behaviour on that occasion. He wrote *The Slighted Maid*, a comedy ; *The Step-Mother*, a tragi-comedy ; and *Hero and Leander*, a tragedy ; besides several Poems and Translations.

Seward.

But

COMMENDATORY POEMS. cxi

But are your own inspirers, and have made
Such powerful scenes; as, when they please, invade.
Your plot, sense, language, all's so pure and fit,
He's bold, not valiant, dare dispute your wit.

*George Lisle*³³, *Knt.*

XIV.

On Mr. JOHN FLETCHER's Works.

SO shall we joy, when all whom beasts and worms
Had turn'd to their own substances and forms,
Whom earth to earth, or fire hath chang'd to fire,
We shall behold, more than at first entire,
As now we do, to see all thine, thine own
In this thy muse's resurrection:
Whose scatter'd parts, from thy own race, more wounds
Hath suffer'd, than Acteon from his hounds;
Which first their brains, and then their bellies, fed,
And from their excrements new poets bred.
But now thy muse enraged from her urn,
Like ghosts of murder'd bodies, doth return
To accuse the murderers, to right the stage,
And undeceive the long-abused age;
Which casts thy praise on them, to whom thy wit
Gives not more gold than they give dross to it:
Who, not content like felons to purloin,
Add treason to it, and debase thy coin.

But whither am I stray'd? I need not raise
Trophies to thee from other mens' dispraise;
Nor is thy fame on lesser ruins built,
Nor needs thy juster title the foul guilt

³³ *George Lisle, Knight.*] This I take to be the same with Sir John Lisle one of king Charles's judges; for Wood in his Index to his Athenæ, calls Sir John by the name of George: He might perhaps have had two Christian names. If this was he, he was admitted at Oxford in the year 1622, seven years after Beaumont's death, and as he was a kinsman might be supposed to know more of his compositions than a stranger. His testimony therefore adds strength to what has been before advanced concerning Beaumont, nay it does so whether Sir George Lisle be the regicide or not. If he was, he was an eminent lawyer and speaker in the house of commons, and made lord commissioner of the privy-seal by the parliament. After the Restoration he fled to Lozanna in Switzerland, where he was treated as lord chancellor of England, which so irritated some furious Irish loyalists that they shot him dead as he was going to church.

Seward.

Of

cxii COMMENDATORY POEMS.

Of Eastern kings, who, to secure their reign,
Must have their brothers, sons, and kindred slain.
Then was ³⁴ Wit's empire at the fatal height,
When, labouring and sinking with its weight,
From thence a thousand lesser poets sprung,
Like petty princes from the fall of Rome;
When Jonson, Shakespeare, and thyself did sit,
And sway'd in the triumvirate of Wit.
Yet what from Jonson's oil and sweat did flow,
Or what more easy Nature did bestow
On Shakespeare's gentler muse, in thee full grown
Their graces both appear; yet so, that none
Can say, here Nature ends, and Art begins;
But mixt, like th' elements, and born like twins;
So interweav'd, so like, so much the same,
None this mere Nature, that mere Art can name:
'Twas this the ancients meant; Nature and skill
Are the two tops of their Parnassus hill.

J. Denham.

XV.

Upon Mr. JOHN FLETCHER's Plays.

FLETCHER, to thee, we do not only owe
All these good plays, but those of others too:
Thy wit, repeated, does support the stage,
Credits the last, and entertains this age.
No worthies form'd by any muse, but thine,
Could purchase robes to make themselves so fine:
What brave commander is not proud to see
Thy brave Melantius in his gallantry?
Our greatest ladies love to see their scorn
Out-done by thine, in what themselves have worn:
Th' impatient widow, ere the year be done,
Sees thy Aspatia weeping in her gown.
I never yet the tragic strain assay'd,
Deterr'd by that inimitable Maid;
And when I venture at the comic stile,
Thy Scornful Lady ³⁵ seems to mock my toil:

³⁴ *Wit's empire at the fatal height.*] i. e. The highest pitch which Fate allows it to rise to.—The following account of Shakespeare, Jonson, and Fletcher, though rather too favourable to the last, is as much preferable to all the former poets encomiums as Sir John was preferable to them in abilities as a poet. *Seward,*

³⁵ *Thy Scornful Lady.*] Many great men, as well as Mr. Waller, have

COMMENDATORY POEMS. cxiii

Thus has thy muse, at once, improv'd and marr'd
Our sport in plays, by rend'ring it too hard.
So when a sort of lusty shepherds throw
The bar by turns, and none the rest outgo
So far, but that the best are measuring casts,
Their emulation and their pastime lasts;
But if some brawny yeoman of the guard
Step in, and tofs the axle-tree a yard,
Or more, beyond the furthest mark, the rest
Despairing stand, their sport is at the best.

Edw. Waller.

XVI.

TO FLETCHER Reviv'd.

HOW have I been religious? What strange good
Has 'scap'd me, that I never understood?
Have I hell-guarded *heresy* o'erthrown?
Heal'd wounded states? made kings and kingdoms one?
That *Fate* should be so merciful to me,
To let me live t' have said, *I have read thee.*

Fair star, ascend! the joy, the life, the light
Of this tempestuous age, this dark world's fight!
Oh, from thy crown of glory dart one flame
May strike a sacred reverence, whilst thy name
(Like holy flamens to their god of day)
We, bowing, sing; and whilst we praise, we pray.

Bright spirit! whose eternal motion
Of wit, like *time*, still in itself did run;
Binding all others in it, and did give
Commission, how far this, or that, shall live:
Like Destiny ³⁶, thy poems; who, as she
Signs death to all, herself can never die.

have celebrated this play. Beaumont's hand is visible in some high caricatures, but I must own my dissent to its being called a first rate comedy.

Seward.

³⁶ *Like destiny of poems, who, as she*

Sings death to all, herself can never dye.] This is extremely obscure: He says first, that Fletcher is the spirit of poetry, that he is the god of it, and has decreed the fate of all other poems, whether they are to live or dye; after this he is like the destiny of poems, and living only himself signs death to all others. This is very high strained indeed, and rather self-contradictory, for Fletcher's spirit gives commission how far some shall live and yet signs death to all. A slight change will make somewhat easier and clearer sense. I understand the four first lines thus; Fletcher's poetry is the stand-

cxiv COMMENDATORY POEMS.

And now thy purple-robed tragedy,
In her embroider'd buskins, calls mine eye,
Where brave Aëtius we see betray'd, *Valentinian.*
T' obey his death, whom thousand lives obey'd;
Whilst that the *mighty fool* his scepter breaks,
And through his gen'ral's wounds his own doom speaks;
Weaving thus richly Valentinian,
The costliest monarch with the cheapest man.

Soldiers may here to their old glories add,
The Lover love, and be with reason Mad: *Mad Lover.*
Not as of old Alcides furious,
Who, wilder than his bull, did tear the house;
(Hurling his language with the canvas stone)
'Twas thought, the monster roar'd the sob'rer tone.

But, ah! when thou thy sorrow didst inspire
With passions black as is her dark attire,
Virgins, as sufferers, have wept to see *Arcas.*
So white a foul, so red a cruelty; *Bellaris.*
That thou hast griev'd, and, with unthought redress,
Dried their wet eyes who now thy mercy bless;
Yet, loth to lose thy watry jewel, when
Joy wip'd it off, laughter strait sprung't agen.

Now ruddy-cheeked *Mirth* with rosy wings *Comedies.*
Fans ev'ry brow with gladness, whilst she sings *Spanish Curate.*
Delight to all; and the whole theatre *Humorous Lieutenant.*
A festival in Heaven doth appear.
Nothing but pleasure, love; and (like the morn) *Tamer Tam'd.*
Each face a general smiling doth adorn. *Little French Lawyer.*

Here, ye foul speakers, that pronounce the air
Of stews and sewers, I will inform you where,
And how, to cloath aright your wanton wit,
Without her nasty bawd attending it. *Custom of the Country.*
View here a loose thought said with such a grace,
Minerva might have spoke in Venus' face;
So well disguis'd, that 'twas conceiv'd by none,
But Cupid had Diana's linen on;
And all his naked parts so veil'd, they express
The shape with clouding the uncomeliness;

ard of excellence; whatever is not formed by that model must dye,
therefore I read,

Like destiny, thy poems; i. e. Thy poems being the standard of
excellence, are like destiny, which determines the fate of others, but
herself remains still the same. I republish this poem as there are strong
marks of genius in it, particularly in some of the following para-
graphs. *Seward.*

that

COMMENDATORY POEMS. cxv

That if this reformation, which we
 Receiv'd, had not been buried with thee,
 The stage, as this work, might have liv'd and lov'd;
 Her lines the austere scarlet had approv'd;
 And th' *actors* wisely been from that offence
 As clear, as they are now from *audience*.

*Thus with thy *genius* did the *scene* expire,
 Wanting thy active and enliv'ning fire,
 That now (to spread a darkness over all)
 Nothing remains but *poesy* to fall.
 And though from these thy *embers* we receive
 Some warmth, so much as may be said, *we live*;
 That we dare praise thee, blushless, in the head
 Of the best piece *Hermes* to *Love* e'er read;
 That we rejoice and glory in thy wit,
 And feast each other with remembering it;
 That we dare speak thy thought, thy acts recite:
 Yet all men henceforth be afraid to write. *Rich. Lovelace* ³⁷.

XVIII.

Upon the unparallel'd Plays written by those
 renowned Twins of Poetry, BEAUMONT and
 FLETCHER.

WHAT's here? another library of praise ³⁸,
 Met in a troop t' advance contemned plays,
 And bring exploded *wit* again in fashion?
 I can't but wonder at this *reformation*.
 My skipping foul surfeits with so much good,
 To see my hopes into *fruition* bud.

³⁷ *Rich. Lovelace*. † This gentleman was eldest son of a good family, extremely accomplished, being very eminent for wit, poetry, and music, but still more so for politeness of manners and beauty of person. He had an ample fortune and every advantage that seemed to promise happiness in life; but his steady attachment to the royal cause, and a liberality that perhaps approach'd too near profuseness, reduced him to extreme poverty. Something of the gaiety of the soldier appears in the beginning of this poem. His Poems were published in 1749. *Seward*.

³⁸ *Another library of praise*.] This alludes to the numerous commendatory copies of verses on *Tom. Coryate's Crudities*, which swelled into an entire volume. This is touched at in the 23d copy of verses, by Richard Brome:

For the witty copies took,
 Of his encomiums made themselves a book.

Theobald.

A happy

cxvi COMMENDATORY POEMS.

A happy *chymistry*! blest viper, *Joy*!
 That thro' thy mother's bowels gnaw'st thy way!
 Wits flock in shoals, and club to re-erect,
 In spite of *ignorance*, the architect
 Of occidental *poesy*; and turn
 Gods, to recal *Wit's* ashes from their urn.
 Like huge Colosses, they've together knit ⁴⁰
 Their shoulders to support a world of wit.
 The tale of Atlas (tho' of truth it miss)
 We plainly read *mythologiz'd* in this;
 Orpheus and Amphion, whose undying stories
 Made Athens famous, are but *allegories*.
 'Tis Poetry has power to civilize
 Men, worse than stones, more blockish than the trees.
 I cannot choose but think (now things so fall)
 That Wit is past its *climacterical*;
 And though the Muses have been dead and gone,
 I know, they'll find a *resurrection*.
 'Tis vain to praise; they're to themselves a glory,
 And silence is our sweetest *oratory*.
 For he, that names but Fletcher, must needs be
 Found guilty of a loud *hyperbole*.
 His fancy so transcendently aspires,
 He shews himself a wit, who but admires.
 Here are no volumes stuff'd with cheverel sense,
 The very *anagrams* of eloquence;
 Nor long long-winded sentences that be,
 Being rightly spell'd, but wit's *stenography*;
 Nor words, as void of reason as of rhyme,
 Only cæsura'd to spin out the time.
 But here's a *magazine* of purest sense,
 Cloath'd in the newest garb of eloquence:
 Scenes that are quick and sprightly, in whose veins
 Bubbles the quintessence of sweet-high strains.
 Lines, like their Authors, and each word of it
 Does say, 'twas writ b' a *gemini* of wit.

40

————— *they've together met*

Their shoulders to support a world of wit.] I should not find fault
 with *met* and *wit* being made rhimes here, (the poets of those times
 giving themselves such a licence) but that two persons *meeting their*
shoulders is neither sense nor English! I am therefore persuaded the
 author wrote *knit*. So twice in the eighth copy by Jasper Maine,

*In fame, as well as writings, both so knit,
 That no man knows where to divide your wit.*

And again,

Nor were you thus in works and poems knit, &c. Theobald.

How

COMMENDATORY POEMS. cxvii

How happy is our age! how blest our men!
When such rare souls live themselves o'er again.
We err, that think a poet dies; for this
Shews, that 'tis but a *metempsychosis*.
Beaumont and Fletcher here, at last, we see
Above the reach of dull mortality,
Or pow'r of fate: And thus the proverb hits,
(That's so much cross'd) *These men live by their wits.*

Alex. Brome.

XVIII.

On the Death and Works of Mr. JOHN FLETCHER.

MY name, so far from great, that 'tis not known,
Can lend no praise but what thou'dst blush to own;
And no rude hand, or feeble wit, should dare
To vex thy shrine with an unlearned tear.

I'd have a state of wit convok'd, which hath
A power to take up on common faith;
That, when the stock of the whole kingdom's spent
In but preparative to thy monument,
The prudent council may invent fresh ways
To get new contribution to thy praise;
And rear it high, and equal to thy wit;
Which must give life and monument to it.

So when, late, Essex died⁴¹, the public face
Wore sorrow in't; and to add mournful grace
To the sad pomp of his lamented fall,
The commonwealth serv'd at his funeral,
And by a solemn order built his hearse;
—But not like thine, built by thyself in verse.
Where thy advanced image safely stands
Above the reach of sacrilegious hands.
Base hands, how impotently you disclose
Your rage 'gainst Camden's learned ashes, whose
Defaced *statua* and martyr'd book,
Like an antiquity and fragment look.
Nonnulla defuncti legibly appear,
So truly now Camden's *Remains* lie there.
Vain malice! how he mocks thy rage, while breath
Of Fame shall speak his great Elizabeth!

⁴¹ *So when, late, Essex dy'd*] The Earl of *Essex*, who had been general for the parliament in the civil war against King Charles the First, died on the 14th of September, 1646, and the first folio of Beaumont and Fletcher's Works was published in 1647. *Theobald.*

cxviii COMMENDATORY POEMS.

'Gainst time and thee he well provided hath;
 Britannia is the tomb and epitaph.

Thus princes honours; but wit only gives
 A name which to succeeding ages lives.

Singly we now consult ourselves and fame,
 Ambitious to twist ours with thy great name.
 Hence we thus bold to praise: For as a vine,
 With subtle wreath and close embrace, doth twine
 A friendly elm, by whose tall trunk it shoots
 And gathers growth and moisture from its roots;
 About its arms the thankful clusters cling
 Like bracelets, and with purple ammelling
 The blue-cheek'd grape, stuck in its vernant hair,
 Hangs like rich jewels in a beauteous ear.
 So grow our praises by thy wit; we do
 Borrow support and strength, and lend but show.
 And but thy male wit ⁴², like the youthful sun,
 Strongly begets upon our passion,
 Making our sorrow teem with elegy,
 Thou yet unweep'd, and yet unprais'd might'st be,
 But they 're imperfect births; and such are all
 Produc'd by causes not univocal,
 The scapes of Nature, passives being unfit;
 And hence our verse speaks only mother-wit.

Oh, for a fit o'th' father! for a spirit
 That might but parcel of thy worth inherit;
 For but a spark of that diviner fire,
 Which thy full breast did animate and inspire;
 That souls could be divided, thou traduce
 But a small particle of thine to us!
 Of thine; which we admir'd when thou didst sit
 But as a joint-commissioner in wit;
 When it had plummets hung on to suppress
 Its too-luxuriant growing mightiness:
 Till, as that tree which scorns to be kept down,
 Thou grew'st to govern the whole stage alone;
 In which orb thy throng'd light did make the star,
 Thou wert th' intelligence did move that sphere.
 Thy fury was compos'd; Rapture no fit
 That hung on thee; nor thou far gone in wit
 As men in a disease; thy fancy clear,
 Muse chaste, as those flames whence they took their fire ⁴³;

⁴² *And but thy male wit, &c.*] Mr. Seward omits this and the nine following lines.

⁴³ *Muse chaste, as those frames whence they took their fire;*] This seems obscure, for what are those frames whence Fletcher took his fire?

COMMENDATORY POEMS. cxix

No spurious composures amongst thine,
Got in adultery 'twixt Wit and Wine.

And as th' hermetical physicians draw
From things that curse of the first-broken law,
That *ens venenum*, which extracted thence
Leaves nought but primitive good and innocence:
So was thy spirit calcin'd; no mixtures there
But perfect, such as next to simples are.
Not like those meteor-wits which wildly fly
In storm and thunder thro' th' amazed sky;
Speaking but th' ills and villainies in a state,
Which fools admire, and wise men tremble at,
Full of portent and prodigy, whose gall
Oft 'scapes the vice, and on the man doth fall.
Nature us'd all her skill, when thee she meant
A wit at once both great and innocent.

Yet thou hadst tooth; but 'twas thy judgment, not
For mending one word a whole sheet to blot.
Thou couldst anatomise with ready art,
And skilful hand, crimes lock'd close up i' th' heart.
Thou couldst unfold dark plots, and shew that path
By which Ambition climb'd to greatness hath;
Thou couldst the rises, turns, and falls of states,
How near they were their periods and dates;
Couldst mad the subject into popular rage,
And the grown seas of that great storm assuage;
Dethrone usurping tyrants, and place there
The lawful prince and true inheriter;
Knew'st all dark turnings in the labyrinth
Of policy, which who but knows he sinn'd,
Save thee, who un-infected didst walk in't,
As the great genius of government.
And when thou laidst thy tragic buskin by,
To court the stage with gentle comedy,
How new, how proper th' humours, how express'd
In rich variety, how neatly dress'd

fire? The stars? Even if this was meant, I should think *flames* the better word: But as *flames* will signify *heavenly fire* in general, either the stars, sun, angels, or even the Spirit of God himself, who maketh his *ministers flames of fire*: I much prefer the word, and believe it the original. As this poet was a clergyman of character with regard to his sanctity, and much celebrates Fletcher's chastity of sentiments and language, it is very evident that many words which appear gross to us were not so in king Charles the First's age. See pages 70, 71, and 72 of the Preface.

Seward.

cxx COMMENDATORY POEMS.

In language, how rare plots, what strength of wit
Shin'd in the face and every limb of it !
The stage grew narrow while thou grew'st to be
In thy whole life an *excellent comedy*.

To these a virgin-mo'desty, which first met
Applause with blush and fear, as if he yet
Had not deserv'd ; 'till bold with constant praise
His brows admitted the unfought-for bays.
Nor would he ravish Fame ; but left men free
To their own vote and ingenuity.
When his fair Shepherdess, on the guilty stage,
Was martyr'd between ignorance and rage ;
At which the impatient virtues of those few
Could judge, grew high, cried *murder !* tho' he knew
The innocence and beauty of his child,
He only, as if unconcerned, smil'd.
Princes have gather'd since each scatter'd grace,
Each line and beauty of that injur'd face ⁴³ ;
And on th' united parts breath'd such a fire
As, spite of malice, she shall ne'er expire.

Attending, not affecting, thus the crown,
'Till every hand did help to set it on,
He came to be sole monarch, and did reign
In Wit's great empire, absolute sovereign. *John Harris* ⁴⁴.

⁴³ *Princes have gather'd since each scatter'd grace,
Each line and beauty of that injur'd face.*] This relates to king
Charles the First causing the Faithful Shepherdess to be revived, and
acted before him. The lines are extremely beautiful, and do honour
to the king's taste in poetry, which as it comes from an adversary (tho'
certainly a very candid one, and who before condemned the fire-brand-
scriblers and meteor-wits of his age) is a strong proof of its being a
very good one. Queen Elizabeth may be called the mother of the
English poets ; James the First was a pedagogue to them, encouraged
their literature, but debased it with puns and pedantry ; Charles the
First revived a good taste, but the troubles of his reign prevented the
great effects of his patronage. *Seward.*

⁴⁴ *John Harris* was of New-College, Oxford, Greek professor of
the university, and so eminent a preacher that he was called a second
Chrysostom. In the civil wars he sided with the Presbyterians, and
was one of the Assembly of Divines, and is the only poet in this col-
lection whom we certainly know to have been for the parliament
against the king. His poem has great merit ; the fine break after
the mention of the earl of Essex, and the simile of the elm and
clusters of grapes, deserve a particular attention. After this simile
I have struck out some lines that were unequal in merit to their
brethren, lest the reader, tired with these, should stop too short ; for
those which now follow, tho' unjust with regard to Beaumont, are
poetically good. *Seward.*

XIX.

On Mr. JOHN FLETCHER, and his Works, never
before published.

TO flatter living fools is easy sleight;
But hard, to do the living-dead men right.
To praise a landed lord, is gainful art;
But thankless to pay tribute to desert.
This should have been my task: I had intent
To bring my rubbish to thy monument,
To stop some crannies there, but that I found
No need of least repair; all firm and sound.
Thy well-built fame doth still itself advance
Above the world's mad zeal and ignorance.
Tho' thou diedst not possess'd of that same self,
Which nobler souls call dirt, the city, wealth:
Yet thou hast left unto the times so great
A legacy, a treasure so compleat,
That 'twill be hard, I fear, to prove thy will:
Men will be wrangling, and in doubting still,
How so vast sums of wit were left behind;
And yet nor debts, nor sharers, they can find.
'Twas the kind providence of Fate to lock
Some of this treasure up; and keep a stock
For a reserve until these fullen days;
When scorn, and want, and danger, are the bays
That crown the head of merit. But now he,
Who in thy will hath part, is rich and free.
But there's a caveat enter'd by command,
None should pretend, but those can understand.

Henry Moody, Bart⁴⁵.

⁴⁵ Sir Henry Moody was of the number of those gentlemen who had honorary degrees conferred by king Charles the First at his return to Oxford after the battle of Edgehill. The poem has some strong marks of genius in it, particularly in these lines,

— until these fullen days;
*When scorn, and want, and danger, are the bays
That crown the head of merit.*

I confess myself a great admirer of verses in rhyme, whose pauses run into each other as boldly as blank verse itself. When our moderns corrected many faults in the measure of our verse by making the accents always fall on right syllables, and laying aside those harsh elisions used by our ancient poets, they mistook this run of the verses into each other after the manner of Virgil, Homer, &c. for a fault, which de-
prived

XX.

On the deceased Author, Mr. JOHN FLETCHER, his
Plays; and especially the Mad Lover.

WHILST his well-organ'd body doth retreat
To its first matter, and the formal heat ⁴⁶
Triumphant sits in judgment, to approve
Pieces above our censure, and our love ⁴⁷;
Such, as dare boldly venture to appear
Unto the curious eye, and critic ear:
Lo, the Mad Lover in these various times
Is press'd to life, t' accuse us of our crimes.
While Fletcher liv'd, who equal to him writ
Such lasting monuments of natural wit?
Others might draw their lines with sweat, like those
That (with much pains) a garrison inclose;
Whilst his sweet, fluent, vein did gently run,
As uncontrol'd and smoothly as the sun.
After his death, our theatres did make
Him in his own unequal language speak:
And now, when all the muses out of their
Approved modesty silent appear,
This play of Fletcher's braves the envious light,
As wonder of our ears once, now our sight.
Three-and-fourfold-blest poet, who the lives
Of poets, and of theatres, survives!
A groom, or ostler of some wit, may bring
His Pegasus to the Castalian spring;
Boast, he a race o'er the Pharsalian plain,
Or happy Tempe-valley, dares maintain:
Brag, at one leap, upon the double cliff
(Were it as high as monstrous Teneriffe)
Of far-renown'd Parnassus he will get,
And there (t' amaze the world) confirm his feat:
When our admired Fletcher vaunts not aught,
And slighted every thing he writ as nought:

prived our rhyme of that grandeur and dignity of numbers which
arises from a perpetual change of pauses, and turned whole poems into
distichs. Seward.

⁴⁶ *And the formal heat, &c.*] *Formal heat*, I take to be a metaphy-
sical and logical term for the *soul*, as the *formal cause* is that which
constitutes the essence of any thing. Fletcher's soul therefore now sits
in judgment, to approve works deserving of praise. Seward.

⁴⁷ *Pieces above our candour.*] Amended by Theobald.

While

COMMENDATORY POEMS. cxxiii

While all our English wondring world (in's cause)
 Made this great city echo with applause.
 Read him, therefore, all that can read; and those,
 That cannot, learn; if you're not learning's foes,
 And wilfully resolved to refuse
 The gentle raptures of this happy muse.
 From thy great constellation (noble soul)
 Look on this kingdom; suffer not the whole
 Spirit of poesy retire to Heaven;
 But make us entertain what thou hast given.
 Earthquakes and thunder diapasons make;
 The seas' vast roar, and irresistible shake
 Of horrid winds, a sympathy compose;
 So in these things there's music in the close:
 And tho' they seem great discords in our ears,
 They are not so to them above the spheres.
 Granting these music, how much sweeter's that
 Mnemosyne's daughters' voices do create?
 Since Heav'n, and earth, and seas, and air consent
 To make an harmony, (the instrument,
 Their own agreeing selves) shall we refuse
 The music which the deities do use?
 Troy's ravish'd Ganymede doth sing to Jove,
 And Phœbus' self plays on his lyre above.
 The Cretan gods, or glorious men, who will
 Imitate right, must wonder at thy skill,
 (Best poet of thy times!) or he will prove
 As mad, as thy brave Memnon was with love.

*Aston Cokaine, Bart*⁴⁸.

XXI.

On the Edition of Mr. FRANCIS BEAUMONT's and
 Mr. JOHN FLETCHER's Plays, never printed before.

I AM *amaz'd*; and this same *extasy*
 Is both my *glory* and *apology*.

⁴⁸ *Aston Cokaine, Bart.*] This gentleman who claimed being made a baronet by king Charles I. at a time when the king's distress prevented the creation passing the due forms, was a poet of some repute, for which reason this copy is inserted more than for its intrinsic worth. He was lord of the manors of Pooley in Polesworth-parish, Warwickshire, and of Ashburn in Derbyshire; but with a fate not uncommon to wits, spent and sold both; but his descendants of this age have been and are persons of distinguished merit and fortune.

Seward.

Sober

cxxiv COMMENDATORY POEMS.

*Sober joys are dull passions; they must bear
 Proportion to the subject: If so, where
 Beaumont and Fletcher shall vouchsafe to be
 That subject, That joy must be extasy.
 Fury is the complexion of great wits;
 The fool's distemper: He, that's mad by fits,
 Is wise so too. It is the poet's muse;
 The prophet's god; the fool's, and my excuse.
 For (in me) nothing less than Fletcher's name
 Could have begot, or justified, this flame.
 Beaumont } return'd! methinks, it should not be:
 Fletcher }
 No, not in's works; plays are as dead as he.
 The palate of this age gusts nothing high,
 That has not custard in't, or bawdery.
 Folly and madness fill the stage: The scene
 Is Athens; where, the guilty, and the mean,
 The fool 'scapes well enough; learned and great,
 Suffer an ostracism; stand exulate.
 Mankind is fall'n again, shrunk a degree,
 A step below his very apostacy.
 Nature her self is out of tune; and sick
 Of tumult and disorder, lunatic.
 Yet what world would not chearfully endure
 The torture, or disease, t' enjoy the cure?
 This book's the balsam, and the bellebore,
 Must preserve bleeding Nature, and restore
 Our crazy stupor to a just quick sense
 Both of ingratitude, and Providence.
 That teaches us (at once) to feel and know,
 Two deep points; what we want, and what we owe.
 Yet great goods have their ills: Should we transmit,
 To future times, the pow'r of love and wit,
 In this example; would they not combine
 To make our imperfections their design?
 They'd study our corruptions; and take more
 Care to be ill, than to be good, before.
 For nothing, but so great infirmity,
 Could make them worthy of such remedy.
 Have you not seen the sun's almighty ray
 Rescue th' affrighted world, and redeem day
 From black despair? how his victorious beam
 Scatters the storm, and drowns the petty flame
 Of lightning, in the glory of his eye;
 How full of pow'r, how full of majesty?*

When,

When, to us mortals, nothing else was known,
But the sad doubt, whether to burn, or drown.

*Choler, and phlegm, heat, and dull ignorance,
Have cast the people into such a trance,
That fears and danger seem great equally,
And no dispute left now, but how to die.
Just in this nick, Fletcher sets the world clear
Of all disorder, and reforms us here.*

*The formal youth, that knew no other grace,
Or value, but his title, and his lace,
Glasses himself, and, in this faithful mirror,
Views, disapproves, reforms, repents his error.*

*The credulous, bright girl, that believes all
Language, in oaths (if good) canonical,
Is fortified, and taught, here, to beware
Of ev'ry specious bait, of ev'ry snare
Save one; and that same caution takes her more,
Than all the flattery she felt before.
She finds her boxes, and her thoughts betray'd
By the corruption of the chamber-maid;
Then throws her washes and dissemblings by,
And vows nothing but ingenuity.*

*The severe statesman quits his sullen form
Of gravity and bus'ness; the lukewarm
Religious, his neutrality; the hot
Brainsick illuminate, his zeal; the sot,
Stupidity; the soldier, his arrears;
The court, its confidence; the plebs, their fears;
Gallants, their apishness and perjury;
Women, their pleasure and inconstancy;
Poets, their wine; the usurer, his pelf;
The world, its vanity; and I, my self. Roger L'Estrange⁴⁹.*

XXII.

On the EDITION.

FLETCHER (whose fame no age can ever waste;
Envy of ours, and glory of the last)
Is now alive again; and with his name
His sacred ashes wak'd into a flame;
Such as before, did by a secret charm
The wildest heart subdue, the coldest warm;

⁴⁹ For the same reason that Sir Aston Cokaine's poem is reprinted, Sir Roger L'Estrange's keeps its place. His name is well known to the learned world, but this copy of verses does no great honour either to himself or our Authors.

Seward.

And

cxxvi COMMENDATORY POEMS.

And lend the ladies' eyes a power more bright,
Dispensing thus to either heat and light.

He to a sympathy those souls betray'd,
Whom love, or beauty, never could persuade;
And in each mov'd spectator could beget
A real passion by a counterfeit:

When first Bellario bled, what lady there
Did not for every drop let fall a tear?

And when Aspatia wept, not any eye
But seem'd to wear the same sad livery;
By him inspir'd, the feign'd Lucina drew
More streams of melting sorrow than the true;
But then the Scornful Lady did beguile
'Their easy griefs, and teach them all to smile.

'Thus he affections could or raise or lay;
Love, grief, and mirth, thus did his charms obey;
He Nature taught her passions to out-do,
How to refine the old, and create new;
Which such a happy likeness seem'd to bear,
As if that Nature Art, Art Nature were.

Yet all had nothing been, obscurely kept
In the same urn wherein his dust hath slept;
Nor had he ris' the Delphic wreath to claim,
Had not the dying scene expir'd his name;
Despair our joy hath doubled, he is come;
Thrice welcome by this *post-liminium*.
His loss preserv'd him; They, that silenc'd Wit,
Are now the authors to eternize it;

Thus poets are in spite of Fate reviv'd,
And plays by intermission longer-liv'd.

Tho. Stanley ⁵⁰.

XXIII.

To the Memory of the Deceased but Ever-living Au-
thor, in these his Poems, Mr. JOHN FLETCHER.

ON the large train of Fletcher's friends let me
(Retaining still my wonted modesty)
Become a waiter, in my ragged verse,
As follower to the *musés*' followers.
Many here are of noble rank and worth,
That have, by strength of Art, set Fletcher forth

⁵⁰ Mr. Stanley educated at Pembroke-Hall, Cambridge, was a poet of some eminence, and his verses have merit; and contain a proof of what is asserted in the Preface, of plays being kept unpublished for the benefit of the players.

Seward.

In

COMMENDATORY POEMS. cxxvii

In true and lively colours, as they saw him,
 And had the best abilities to draw him ;
 Many more are abroad, that write, and look
 To have their lines set before Fletcher's book ;
 Some, that have known him too ; some more, some less ;
 Some only but by hear-say, some by guess ;
 And some for fashion-sake would take the hint,
 To try how well their wits would shew in print.
 You, that are here before me, gentlemen,
 And princes of Parnassus by the pen,
 And your just judgments of his worth, that have
 Preserv'd this Author's memory from the grave,
 And made it glorious ; let me, at your gate,
 Porter it here, 'gainst those that come too late,
 And are unfit to enter. Something I
 Will deserve here : For, where you versify
 In flowing numbers, lawful weight, and time,
 I'll write, tho' not rich verses, honest rhyme.
 I am admitted. Now, have at the rout
 Of those that would crowd in, but must keep out.
 Bear back, my masters ; pray keep back ; forbear :
 You cannot, at this time, have entrance here.
 You, that are worthy, may, by intercession,
 Find entertainment at the next impression.
 But let none then attempt it, that not know
 The reverence due, which to this shrine they owe :
 All such must be excluded ; and the sort,
 That only upon trust, or by report,
 Have taken Fletcher up, and think it trim
 To have their verses planted before him :
 Let them read first his works, and learn to know him ;
 And offer, then, the sacrifice they owe him.
 But far from hence be such, as would proclaim
 Their knowledge of this *author*, not his fame ;
 And such, as would pretend, of all the rest,
 To be the best *wits* that have known him best.
 Depart hence, all such writers, and before
 Inferior ones thrust in, by many a score ;
 As formerly, before Tom Coryate,
 Whose work, before his praisers, had the fate
 To perish : For the witty copies took
 Of his *encomiums* made themselves a *book*.
 Here's no such subject for you to out-do,
 Out-shine, out-live, (tho' well you may do too
 In other spheres) for Fletcher's flourishing bays
 Must never fade, while Phœbus wears his rays.

Therefore

cxviii COMMENDATORY POEMS.

Therefore forbear to press upon him thus.
 Why, what are you, (cry some) that prate to us?
 Do not we know you for a flashy meteor?
 And stil'd (at best) the *musés'* serving-creature?
 Do you control? Ye've had your jeer: Sirs, no;
 But, in an humble manner, let you know,
 Old serving-creatures oftentimes are fit
 T'inform young masters, as in land, in wit,
 What they inherit; and how well their dads
 Left one, and wish'd the other, to their lads.
 And from departed poets I can guess
 Who has a greater share of wit, who less.
 'Way fool, another says. I let him rail,
 And 'bout his own ears flourish his wit-flail,
 'Till with his swingle he his noddle break;
 While this of Fletcher, and his *Works*, I speak:
 His *works*? (says Momus) nay, his *plays*, you'd say:
 Thou hast said right, for that to him was play
 Which was to others' brains a toil: With ease
 He play'd on waves, which were their troubled seas.
 His nimble births have longer liv'd than theirs
 That have, with strongest labour, divers years
 Been sending forth the issues of their brains
 Upon the *stage*; and shall, to th' *stationer's* gains,
 Life after life take, till some after-age
 Shall put down *printing*, as this doth the *stage*;
 Which nothing now presents unto the eye,
 But in *dumb-shows* her own sad *tragedy*.
 'Would there had been no sadder works abroad,
 Since her decay, acted in fields of blood!

But to the man again, of whom we write,
 The *writer* that made writing his delight,
 Rather than work. *He* did not pump, nor drudge,
 To beget *wit*, or manage it; nor trudge
 To wit-conventions with note-book, to glean,
 Or steal, some jests to foist into a scene:
 He scorn'd those shifts. You, that have known him, know
 The common talk; That from his lips did flow,
 And run at waste, did favour more of wit,
 Than any of his time, or since, have writ
 (But few excepted) in the stage's way:
 His *scenes* were *acts*, and every *act* a *play*.
 I knew him in his strength; even then, when he,
 That was the master of his art and me⁵¹,

⁵¹ *Master of his art and me.*] Mr. Richard Brome was many years a servant to Ben Jonson (an amanuensis, I presume), and learned

COMMENDATORY POEMS. cxxix

Most knowing Jonson (proud to call him *son*),
 In friendly envy swore he had out-done
His very self. I knew him, till he died;
 And, at his dissolution, what a tide
 Of sorrow overwhelm'd the *stage*; which gave
 Vollies of sighs to fend him to his grave,
 And grew distracted in most violent fits,
 For *she* had lost the best part of her *wits*.
 In the first year, our famous Fletcher fell,
 Of good king Charles, who grac'd these *poems* well,
 Being then in life of action: But they died
 Since the king's absence; or were laid aside,
 As is their *poet*. Now, at the report
 Of the *king's* second coming to his court,
 The *books* creep from the *press* to life, not *action*;
 Crying unto the world, that no protraction
 May hinder *sacred majesty* to give
 Fletcher, in them, leave on the *stage* to live.
 Others may more in lofty verses move;
 I only, thus, exprefs my truth and love. *Rich. Brome.*

XXIV⁵¹.

Upon the Printing of Mr. JOHN FLETCHER's Works.

WHAT means this numerous guard? or, do we come
 To file our names, or verse, upon the tomb
 Of Fletcher, and, by boldly making known
 His wit, betray the nothing of our own?
 For, if we grant him dead, it is as true
 Against ourselves, no wit, no poet now;

ed the art of writing comedy under him: Upon this, Ben compliments him in a short poem prefix'd to Brome's Northern Lads.

- ' I had you for a servant, once Dick Brome,
- ' And you perform'd a servant's faithful parts;
- ' Now you are got into a nearer room
- ' Of fellowship, professing my old arts, &c.' *Theobald.*

⁵¹ The Commendatory Poems were printed without judgment or order; several of them (particularly the first as rank'd in the late editions) greatly injure our Authors by injudicious encomiums, and have too little merit to be republished. Mr. Theobald left several corrections upon these obscure Poems, and many others would have been added, had not *una litura* appeared the best remedy. All are therefore now discarded but what appeared worthy of the reader's attention, and these are ranged according to the order of time in which they seem to have been wrote. Beaumont himself now leads in defence of his friend Fletcher's charming dramatic pastoral the Faithful Shepherdess,

cxxx COMMENDATORY POEMS.

Or if he be return'd from his cool shade
To us, this book his resurrection's made:
We bleed ourselves to death, and but contrive
By our own epitaphs to shew him alive.
But let him live! and let me prophesy,
As I go swan-like out ⁵¹, our peace is nigh:
A balm unto the wounded age I sing;
And nothing now is wanting, but the king.

Ja. Shirley ⁵².

XXV.

On the Dramatic Poems of Mr. JOHN FLETCHER.

WONDER! who's here? Fletcher, long buried,
Reviv'd? 'Tis he! he's risen from the dead;
His winding-sheet put off, walks above ground,
Shakes off his fetters, and is better bound.
And may he not, if rightly understood,
Prove plays are lawful? he hath *made them good*.
Is any *Lover Mad*? see, here *Love's Cure*;
Unmarried? to a *Wife* he may be sure,

which having been damn'd at its first appearance on the stage, Beaumont and Jonson, with the spirits of Horace and Juvenal, lash the dull herd for their stupid ingratitude. *Seward.*

In addition to the above, which Mr. Seward makes an introductory Note, it may not be amiss to remark, that the First Folio had thirty-six Commendatory Poems; from which the Editors of the Second Folio selected no more than eleven. In the Octavo of 1711, all but one were copied from the First Folio; and to these were added Beaumont's and Jonson's Verses on the Faithful Shepherdess. Of these thirty-seven Mr. Seward retained twenty-three, and added Poem IV. signed *J. F.* We think that Seward, so far from rejecting any pieces worth preservation, has kept some which might very well have been spared: We have, however, adopted his selection, which ends with Shirley's poem; and shall now restore the Verses written by Gardiner and Hills, (not because they possess any poetick merit, but that the Reader may judge what respect is due to the testimony of those Verses, which are frequently mentioned as ascribing particular plays to Fletcher), and add a passage, relative to our Authors, written by the ingenious Mr. Fenton.

⁵¹ *As I go swan-like out.*] This seems to allude to his verses having been the last in the Collection.

⁵² Mr. Shirley was publisher of the First Folio edition in 1647.

Seward.

By *publisher* we suppose Mr. Seward means *editor*: This Mr. Shirley certainly was not. It is true he wrote the Preface; but it would be exceedingly unjust to that great man, to believe he did more for, or at least could be *editor* of, so incorrect a book.

A rare

COMMENDATORY POEMS. cxxxix

A rare one, *for a Month*; if she displease,
 The *Spanish Curate* gives a writ of ease.
 Enquire the *Custom of the Country*, then
 Shall the *French Lawyer* set you free again.
 If the two *Fair Maids* take it wondrous ill,
 (One of the *Inn*, the other of the *Mill*)
 'That th' *Lovers' Progress* stopt, and they defam'd,
 Here's that makes *Women Pleas'd*, and *Tamer Tam'd*.
 But who then plays the *Coxcomb*? or will try
 His *Wit at Several Weapons*, or else die?
 Nice *Valour*, and he doubts not to engage
 The *Noble Gentleman*, in *Love's Pilgrimage*,
 To take revenge on the *False One*, and run
 The *Honest Man's Fortune*, to be undone
 Like *Knight of Malta*, or else *Captain* be,
 Or th' *Humorous Lieutenant*; go to sea
 (*A Voyage* for to starve) he's very loath,
 'Till we are all at peace, to swear an oath,
 That then the *Loyal Subject* may have leave
 To lie from *Beggars' Bush*, and undeceive
 The creditor, discharge his debts; why so,
 Since we can't pay to Fletcher what we owe?
 Oh, could his *Prophetess* but tell one *Chance*,
 When that the *Pilgrims* shall return from France,
 And once more make this kingdom as of late,
 The *Island Princess*, and we celebrate
 A *Double Marriage*; every one to bring
 To Fletcher's memory his offering,
 That thus at last unsequesters the stage,
 Brings back the silver, and the golden age! *Robert Gardiner*.

XXVI.

Upon the ever-to-be-admired Mr. JOHN FLETCHER,
 and his Plays.

WHAT's all this preparation for? or why
 Such sudden triumphs? Fletcher, the people cry!
 Just so, when kings approach, our conduits run
 Claret, as here the spouts flow *Helicon*:
 See, every sprightly *muse*, dress'd trim and gay,
 Strews herbs and scatters roses in his way.

Thus th' outward yard set round with *bays* we've seen,
 Which from the garden hath transplanted been;
 Thus, at the prætor's feast, with needless costs,
 Some must b'employ'd in painting of the posts;

cxxxii COMMENDATORY POEMS.

And some, as dishes made for sight, not taste,
Stand here as things for show to Fletcher's feast.
Oh, what an honour, what a grace 't had been,
T' have had his cook in *Rollo* serve them in!

Fletcher, the king of poets! such was he,
That earn'd all tribute, claim'd all sovereignty;
And may he that denies it, learn to blush
At's *Loyal Subject*, starve at's *Beggars' Bush*;
And, if not drawn by example, shame, nor grace,
Turn o'er to's *Coxcomb*, and the *Wild-Goose Chase*.

Monarch of wit! great magazine of wealth!
From whose rich *bank*, by a Promethean stealth,
Our lesser flames do blaze! His the true fire,
When they, like glow-worms, being touch'd, expire.
'Twas first believ'd, because he always was
The *ipse dixit*, and Pythagoras
To our disciple-wits, his soul might run
(By the same dreamt-of transmigration)
Into their rude and indigested brain,
And so inform their chaos-lump again;
For many specious brats of this last age
Spoke Fletcher perfectly in every page.
This rous'd his rage, to be abused thus,
Made's *Lover Mad*, *Lieutenant Humorous*.

Thus *ends of gold and silver-men* are made
(As th' use to say) goldsmiths of his own trade;
Thus *rag-men* from the dunghill often hop,
And publish forth by chance a broker's shop.
But by his own light, now, we have descried
The dross, from that hath been so purely tried.
Proteus of wit! who reads him doth not see
The manners of each sex, of each degree?
His full-stor'd fancy doth all humours fill,
From th' *Queen of Corinth* to the *Maid o'th' Mill*;
His *Curate*, *Lawyer*, *Captain*, *Prophetess*,
Shew he was all and every one of these;
He taught (so subtly were their fancies seiz'd)
To *Rule a Wife*, and yet the *Women Pleas'd*.

Parnassus is thine own; claim it as merit,
Law makes the *Elder Brother* to inherit.

G. Hills.

EXTRACT

COMMENDATORY POEMS. cxxxiii

EXTRACT from FENTON'S POEMS.

—like the radiant twins that gild the sphere,
Fletcher and Beaumont next in pomp appear:
The first a fruitful vine, in bloomy pride,
Had been by superfluity destroy'd,
But that his friend, judiciously severe,
Prun'd the luxuriant boughs with artful care:
On various sounding harps the muses play'd,
And sung, and quaff'd their nectar in the shade.

Few moderns in the lists with these may stand,
For in those days were giants in the land:
Suffice it now by lineal right to claim,
And bow with filial awe to Shakespeare's fame;
The second honours are a glorious name.
Achilles dead, they found no equal lord,
To wear his armour, and to wield his sword.

}

UPON AN HONEST MAN'S FORTUNE⁵².

By Mr. JOHN FLETCHER.

YOU that can look thro' Heav'n, and tell the stars,
 Observe their kind conjunctions, and their wars;
 Find out new lights, and give them where you please,
 To those men honours, pleasures, to those ease;
 You that are God's surveyors, and can shew
 How far, and when, and why the wind doth blow;
 Know all the charges of the dreadful thunder,
 And when it will shoot over, or fall under;
 Tell me, by all your art I conjure ye,
 Yes, and by truth, what shall become of me?
 Find out my star, if each one, as you say,
 Have his peculiar angel, and his way⁵³;
 Observe my fate, next fall into your dreams,
 Sweep clean your houses, and new-line your schemes,
 Then say your worst! Or have I none at all?
 Or is it burnt out lately? or did fall?
 Or am I poor? not able, no full flame?
 My star, like me, unworthy of a name?
 Is it, your art can only work on those
 That deal with dangers, dignities, and cloaths?
 With love, or new opinions? You all lie!
 A fish-wife hath a fate, and so have I;
 But far above your finding! He that gives,
 Out of his providence, to all that lives,
 And no man knows his treasure, no, not you!
 He that made Ægypt blind, from whence you grew

⁵² These Verses are in all former Editions printed at the end of the Comedy of *The Honest Man's Fortune*: As they have not the least reference to that Play, we have chose to place them here.

⁵³ *Have his peculiar angel, and his way*:] *Way*, in its common acceptation, is not nonsense; it may signify his *path of life mark'd out to him by the stars*. But Mr. Sympson thinks it certainly corrupt, and conjectures first *fay*, which, he says, signifies *spirit*, or *saie*, which he says, though a very uncommon word, signifies *fate*: As he quotes no authority, I can only say, that I remember *fay* used by Spenser as the same with *fairy*, but none of my glossaries know such a word as *saie*; and if an obsolete word must be used, we need not depart at all from the trace of the letters; for *wey* or *way* (the spelling of former ages, as well as the present, being extremely uncertain) may signify *fate*; the *weys* were the *fates* of the Northern nations, from whence the Witches in *Macbeth* are called *weyward sisters*. See Mr. Warburton's ingenious and learned note upon them. *Seward*.

UPON AN HONEST MAN'S FORTUNE. CXXXV

Scabby and lousy, that the world might see
 Your calculations are as blind as ye;
 He that made all the stars you daily read,
 And from thence filch a knowledge how to feed,
 Hath hid this from you; your conjectures all
 Are drunken things, not how, but when they fall:
 Man is his own star, and the soul that can
 Render an honest and a perfect man,
 Commands all light, all influence, all fate;
 Nothing to him falls early, or too late.
 Our acts our angels are, or good or ill,
 Our fatal shadows that walk by us still;
 And when the stars are labouring, we believe
 It is not that they govern, but they grieve
 For stubborn ignorance; all things that are
 Made for our general uses, are at war,
 E'en we among ourselves; and from the strife,
 Your first unlike opinions got a life.

Oh, man! thou image of thy Maker's good⁵⁴,
 What canst thou fear, when breath'd into thy blood
 His spirit is, that built thee? what dull sense
 Makes thee suspect, in need, that Providence
 Who made the morning, and who plac'd the light
 Guide to thy labours; who call'd up the night,
 And bid her fall upon thee like sweet showers
 In hollow murmurs, to lock up thy powers;
 Who gave thee knowledge, who so trusted thee,
 To let thee grow so near himself, the tree;
 Must he then be distrusted? shall his frame
 Discourse with him, why thus and thus I am?
 He made the angels thine, thy fellows all,
 Nay, even thy servants, when devotions call.
 Oh, canst thou be so stupid then, so dim,
 To seek a saving influence, and lose him?
 Can stars protect thee? or can poverty,
 Which is the light to Heav'n⁵⁵, put out his eye?

⁵⁴ —*Thou image of thy Maker's good,*] Mr. Sympfon would read,
 ————*thy Maker good,*

but I see not sufficient reason for a change, since good men are, and
 all men should endeavour to make themselves, *images of the goodness*
of God. Nay, the man who banishes virtue from his soul, forfeits
 the only valuable likeness which he bears to his Maker. *Seward.*

⁵⁵ ———— *Or can poverty,*

Which is the light to Heav'n, put out his eye?] This Poem
 has vast beauties; what Fletcher had often bantered in his comedies,
 the cheats of astrology (almost universally believed in his age) he

cxxxvi UPON AN HONEST MAN'S FORTUNE.

He is my star, in him all truth I find,
 All influence, all fate ! and when my mind
 Is furnish'd with his fullness, my poor story
 Shall out-live all their age, and all their glory !
 The hand of danger cannot fall amiss,
 When I know what, and in whose power it is :
 Nor want, the curse of man ⁵⁶, shall make me groan ;
 A holy hermit is a mind alone.
 Doth not experience teach us, all we can,
 To work ourselves into a glorious man ?
 Love's but an exhalation to best eyes,
 The matter spent, and then the fool's fire dies !
 Were I in love, and could that bright star bring
 Encrease to wealth, honour, and every thing ;
 Were she as perfect good as we can aim,
 The first was so, and yet she lost the game.
 My mistress, then, be Knowledge and fair Truth !
 So I enjoy all beauty and all youth.
 And tho' to Time her lights and laws she lends,
 She knows no age that to corruption bends :
 Friends' promises may lead me to believe,
 But he that is his own friend, knows to live ;
 Affliction, when I know it is but this,
 A deep alloy, whereby man tougher is
 To bear the hammer ⁵⁷, and, the deeper, still
 We still arise more image of his will ;
 Sickness, an humorous cloud 'twixt us and light,
 And death, at longest, but another night !
 Man is his own star, and that soul that can
 Be honest, is the only perfect man.

now lashes with the spirit of a classic satirist, and the zeal of a Christian divine. But the line above, Mr. Symphon says, *is sad stuff* ; I own it a little obscure, but far from deserving that title. Poverty and affliction often bring men to a due sense of their own state, and to an entire dependence on their Creator, therefore may be considered as *lights* that often guide men to Heaven. Poets, whose imaginations are so full of sentiment as Shakespeare's and Fletcher's, do not always study perspicuity in their expressions so much as those of cooler dispositions. Seward.

It is true, that *they do not always study perspicuity* ; but *the light of Heaven* refers to *his eye*, not to *poverty*. This mode of construction is not uncommon with our Authors, and has often occasioned misinterpretations.

⁵⁶ *The cause of man.*] Corrected in 1750.

⁵⁷ *To hear the hammer.*] Seward falsely asserts, that this is the reading of the former editions.

L E T T E R

F R O M

BEAUMONT TO BEN JONSON¹.

THE fun (which doth the greatest comfort bring
To absent friends, because the self-same thing
They know they see, however absent) is
Here, our best haymaker, (forgive me this !
It is our country's stile) in this warm shine
I lie, and dream of your full Mermaid wine.
Oh, we have water mix'd with claret lees,
Drink apt to bring in drier heresies
Than beer, good only for the sonnet's strain,
With fustian metaphors to stuff the brain;
So mix'd, that, given to the thirstiest one,
'Twill not prove alms, unless he have the stone:
I think with one draught man's invention fades,
Two cups had quite spoil'd Homer's Iliades.
'Tis liquor that will find out Sutcliff's wit,
Lie where he will², and make him write worse yet.
Fill'd with such moisture, in most grievous qualms,
Did Robert Wisdom write his singing-psalms ;

¹ *Letter, &c.*] This Letter has hitherto been printed at the end of *Nice Valour*, with the following title: ' Mr. Francis Beaumont's Letter to Ben Jonson, written before he and Master Fletcher came to London, with *two of the precedent comedies* then not finished, which deferred their merry meetings at the Mermaid.' As we apprehend it is demonstrated (p. lxxxix, & *seq.*), that this situation was casual, and the title not to be relied on, we have ventured to remove the one and alter the other.

² *Lie where he will.*] If we keep to the old reading, it must reflect upon Sutcliff's hiding himself for debt. I have not the *Lives* of the Poets now by me, but don't remember any thing of the poverty of this minor poet of our Author's age, by reading *it* for *he*, the archness is smarter as well as more good-humoured, let his wit lie in what part of his body it will. *Seward.*

We see no great archness in this alteration, nor think the old reading implies Sutcliff's hiding for debt.

And

CXXXVIII BEAUMONT'S LETTER TO JONSON.

And so must I do this: And yet I think
 It is a potion sent us down to drink,
 By special Providence, keeps us from fights,
 Makes us not laugh when we make legs to knights.
 'Tis this that keeps our minds fit for our states,
 A medicine to obey our magistrates:
 For we do live more free than you; no hate,
 No envy at one another's happy state,
 Moves us; we are all equal; every whit³
 Of land that God gives men here is their wit,
 If we consider fully; for our best
 And gravest man will with his main house-jest,
 Scarce please you; we want subtilty to do
 The city-tricks, lie, hate, and flatter too:
 Here are none that can bear a painted show,
 Strike when you wink, and then lament the blow⁴;
 Who, like mills set the right way for to grind,
 Can make their gains alike with every wind:
 Only some fellows, with the subtlest pate
 Amongst us, may perchance equivocate
 At selling of a horse, and that's the most.
 Methinks the little wit I had is lost
 Since I saw you; for wit is like a rest
 Held up at tennis⁵, which men do the best

³ ——— *We are all equal every whit:*

Of land that God gives men here is their wit:

If we consider fully.] This dark sentence has been cleared up by Mr. Sympton, who by pointing differently gives this sentiment. Mens wit is here in exact proportion to their land; and then the next sentence,

————— *for our best*

And gravest men will with his main-house jest,

Scarce please you; ———

has a just connection with the former: *Main-house jest*, I read with a hyphen and understand by it the *jest* that receives its merit from the grandeur, riches, and antiquity of his family who utters it, as the hearers admire it upon these accounts. *Seward.*

Main-house is a strange expression; if there needs a hyphen, *house-jest* would be better.

⁴ *Strike when you wink, and then lament the blow.*] This does not appear sense: The poet speaks of courtiers wearing a painted outside (and perhaps *wear* in the former line would be a better reading than *bear*) and after they themselves have struck you secretly when you did not see them, will pretend to lament the blow. But what has *wink* to do with this sense? I doubt not but the true reading is,

Strike when you wink, and then lament the blow. *Seward.*

⁵ *Wit is like a REST held up at tennis.*] This, we think, tends to explain

BEAUMONT'S LETTER TO JONSON. CXXXIX

With the best gamesters: What things have we seen
 Done at the Mermaid! heard words that have been
 So nimble, and so full of subtile flame,
 As if that every one from whence they came
 Had meant to put his whole wit in a jest,
 And had resolv'd to live a fool the rest
 Of his dull life; then when there hath been thrown
 Wit able enough to justify the town
 For three days past; wit that might warrant be
 For the whole city to talk foolishly
 'Till that were cancell'd; and when that was gone,
 We left an air behind us, which alone
 Was able to make the two next companies
 Right witty; tho' but downright fools, mere wise⁵.
 When I remember this, and see that now
 The country gentlemen begin to allow
 My wit for dry-bobs, then I needs must cry,
 I see my days of ballading grow nigh;
 I can already riddle, and can sing
 Catches, sell bargains, and I fear shall bring
 Myself to speak the hardest words I find⁶,
 Over as oft as any, with one wind,
 That takes no medicines: But one thought of thee
 Makes me remember all these things to be
 The wit of our young men, fellows that shew
 No part of good, yet utter all they know;
 Who, like trees of the garden, have growing souls⁷.
 Only strong Destiny, which all controls,

explain the expression that so often occurs of *setting up a rest*, which commonly includes an allusion to some game, and which game here appears to be tennis.

⁵ *Though but downright fools, more wise.*] *More wise* is an anticlimax after *right witty*; but I believe the true reading is *meer wise*, i. e. nothing but meer wisdom itself. It seems an expression perfectly in the stile of the context.

Seward.

⁶ *To speak the hardest words I find,
 Over, as oft as any, with one wind,*

That takes no medicines.] This relates to the play of repeating hard words (such as Chichester church stands in Chichester church-yard) several times in a breath, and generally they are such as betray the speaker into indecencies. But are we to understand *That takes no medicines* only for the sake of strengthening the wind? Or a secret sting at the physicians and apothecaries for affecting hard words, and so one effect of their medicines may jocularly be supposed to enable a man to talk hard words more fluently?

Seward.

The first of these interpretations is, we think, the true.

⁷ *Who like trees of the guard, have growing souls.*] What, says Mr.

cxl BEAUMONT'S LETTER TO JONSON.

I hope hath left a better fate in store
 For me thy friend, than to live ever poor,
 Banish'd unto this home ! Fate once again
 Bring me to thee, who canst make smooth and plain
 The way of knowledge for me, and then I,
 Who have no good but in thy company,
 Protest it will my greatest comfort be
 To acknowledge all I have to flow from thee ⁸.
 Ben, when these *scenes* are perfect, we'll taste wine ;
 I'll drink thy muse's health, thou shalt quaff mine.

Mr. Symphon, can *trees of the guard* possibly mean ? I believe it corrupt for *garden*, which the old poets would without scruple contract into one syllable *gard'n*, and how easily might a transcriber, not knowing what word it was, change it to *guard*. Seward.

It is probable *garden* is right ; but how could our poets, or any poets, or mortals, contract *garden* into one syllable ? The Editors of 1750, have presented to our eyes many contractions and apotrophes which no tongue can express, or human organs articulate.

⁸ *To flow from thee.*] I had observed upon the Woman-Hater before I knew of these verses of Beaumont's having any relation to that play, how much more it was wrote in Ben. Jonson's manner than any other of our Authors foregoing plays : The same is true of *The Nice Valour* which consists chiefly of *passions personated*, not of characters from real life ; and which allows those passions to be carried to the highest pitch of extravagance. Here is a confirmation of Jonson being the writer they imitated. In the greatest part of their works they seem to follow Shakespeare. I find from these verses, that at note 32 in the Woman-Hater, I was mistaken in supposing Fletcher was the sole author of that play from the first edition, having his name only prefixt : It being printed after both their deaths, it was very easy to make the mistake, which was corrected by the second edition. The character of Lapet in this play has so much of that inimitable humour, which was displayed before in the character of Bessus in the *King or no King*, that it was probably the work of the same hand, viz. Beaumont's, for to him Mr. Earle (in the most authentic copy of verses prefixed to these plays, as being writ immediately after the death of Beaumont, and near ten years before that of Fletcher) ascribes Bessus together with Philaster and the Maid's Tragedy. How wrong therefore is the prevailing opinion, that Beaumont's genius was only turned for tragedy, that he possess'd great correctness of judgment, but that the liveliness of imagination, vivacity of wit, and comic humour which so much abounds in these plays were all to be ascribed to Fletcher only ? See Berkenhead's Poem on this subject prefixed to this edition. Seward.

See p. lxxxix, & seq.

Names of the principal Actors who performed in
BEAUMONT and FLETCHER's Plays.

N. B. *The names marked thus * are the names of the Players who
dedicated the edition of 1647 to the Earl of Pembroke.*

William Allen
Hugh Atawell
Richard Burbadge
* Theophilus Byrd
* Robert Benfield
George Birch
William Barksted
Thomas Baffe

Henry Condel
Alexander Cooke
* Hugh Clearke

William Eglestone

Nathaniel Field

Sander Gough
Giles Gary

Thomas Holcombe
* Stephen Hammerton
John Honyman
James Horn

* John Lowin

William Ostler

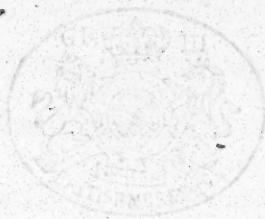
* Thomas Pollard
William Penn

Emanuel Read
John Rice
* Richard Robinson
William Rowly.

Richard Sharpe
Eylæard Swanston
John Shank

* Joseph Taylor
Nicholas Toolie
William Trigg
John Thomson

John Underwood.



C O N T E N T S.

V O L. I.

PREFACES.	— — — — —	i
COMMENDATORY POEMS.	—	lxxxv
VERSES ON AN HONEST MAN'S FORTUNE.	—	cxxxiv
BEAUMONT'S LETTER TO JONSON.	—	cxxxvii
MAID'S TRAGEDY.	— — — — —	i
PHILASTER.	— — — — —	103
KING AND NO KING.	— — — — —	193
SCORNFUL LADY.	— — — — —	301

V O L. II.

CUSTOM OF THE COUNTRY.	— — — — —	i
ELDER BROTHER.	— — — — —	107
SPANISH CURATE.	— — — — —	195
WIT WITHOUT MONEY.	— — — — —	297
BEGGARS' BUSH.	— — — — —	393

V O L. III.

HUMOROUS LIEUTENANT.	— — — — —	i
FAITHFUL SHEPHERDESS.	— — — — —	413
MAD LOVER.	— — — — —	211
LOYAL SUBJECT.	— — — — —	307
RULE A WIFE AND HAVE A WIFE.	— — — — —	419

V O L. IV.

LAWS OF CANDY.	— — — — —	i
FALSE ONE.	— — — — —	75
LITTLE FRENCH LAWYER.	— — — — —	169
TRAGEDY OF VALENTINIAN.	— — — — —	269
MONSIEUR THOMAS.	— — — — —	377

V O L. V.

CHANCES.	— — — — —	i
TRAGEDY OF ROLLO, DUKE OF NORMANDY.	—	83
WILD-GOOSE CHASE.	— — — — —	175
A WIFE FOR A MONTH.	— — — — —	269
LOVERS' PROGRESS.	— — — — —	359
PILGRIM.	— — — — —	453

V O L.

C O N T E N T S.

V O L. VI.

CAPTAIN.	—	—	—	—	—	I
PROPHETESS.	—	—	—	—	—	109
QUEEN OF CORINTH.	—	—	—	—	—	189
TRAGEDY OF BONDUCA.	—	—	—	—	—	279
KNIGHT OF THE BURNING PESTLE.	—	—	—	—	—	373

V O L. VII.

LOVE'S PILGRIMAGE.	—	—	—	—	—	I
DOUBLE MARRIAGE.	—	—	—	—	—	103
MAID IN THE MILL.	—	—	—	—	—	203
KNIGHT OF MALTA.	—	—	—	—	—	295
LOVE'S CURE; OR, THE MARTIAL MAID.	—	—	—	—	—	395

V O L. VIII.

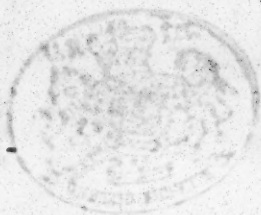
WOMEN PLEAS'D.	—	—	—	—	—	I
NIGHT-WALKER; OR, THE LITTLE THIEF.	—	—	—	—	—	91
ISLAND PRINCESS.	—	—	—	—	—	179
WOMAN'S PRIZE; OR, THE TAMER TAM'D.	—	—	—	—	—	275
NOBLE GENTLEMAN.	—	—	—	—	—	381

V O L. IX.

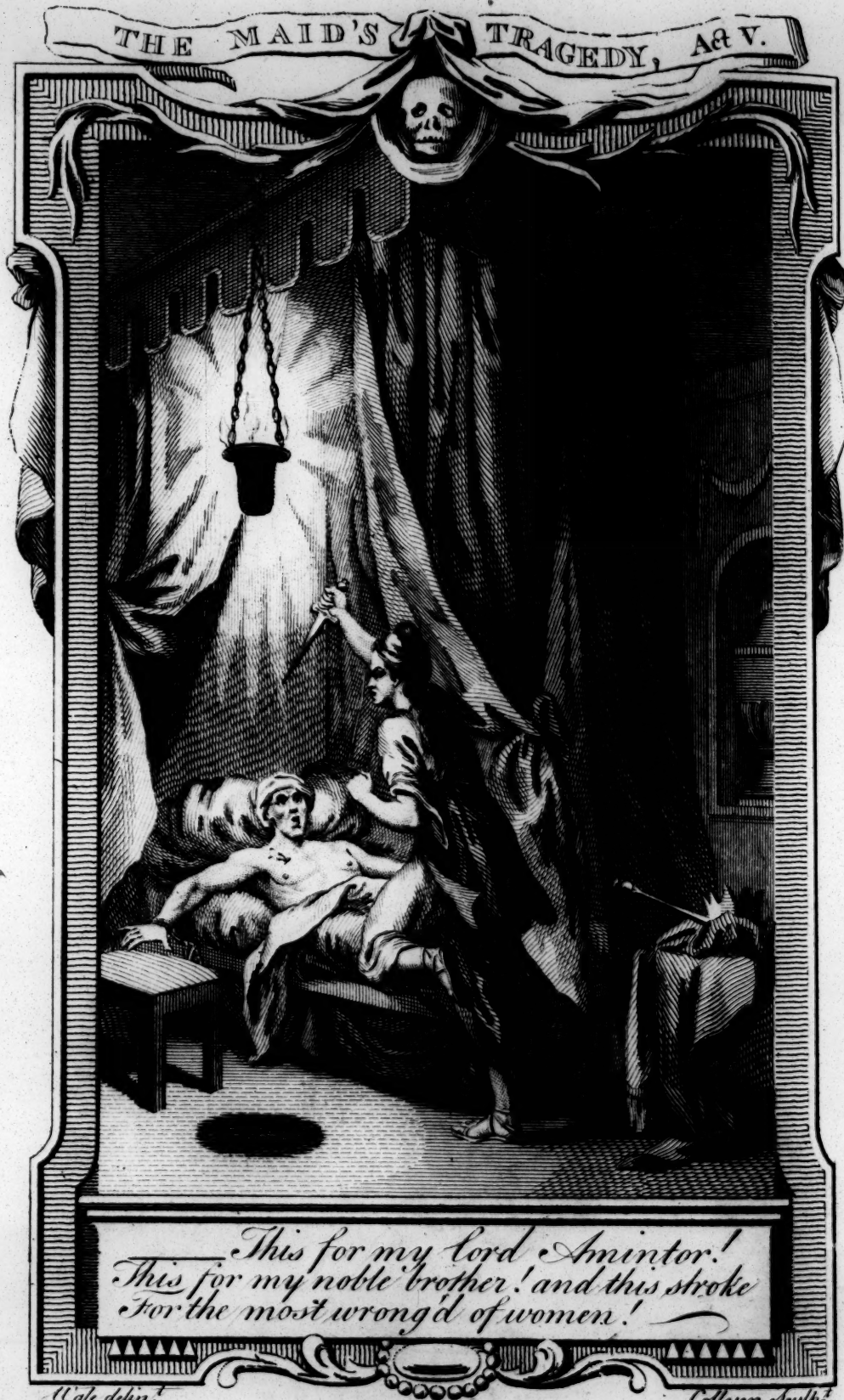
CORONATION.	—	—	—	—	—	I
SEA-VOYAGE.	—	—	—	—	—	79
COXCOMB.	—	—	—	—	—	153
WIT AT SEVERAL WEAPONS.	—	—	—	—	—	243
FAIR MAID OF THE INN.	—	—	—	—	—	339
CUPID'S REVENGE.	—	—	—	—	—	435

V O L. X.

TWO NOBLE KINSMEN.	—	—	—	—	—	I
TRAGEDY OF THIERRY AND THEODORET.	—	—	—	—	—	125
WOMAN-HATER.	—	—	—	—	—	213
NICE VALOUR; OR, THE PASSIONATE MADMAN.	—	—	—	—	—	315
HONEST MAN'S FORTUNE.	—	—	—	—	—	387
MASQUE.	—	—	—	—	—	487
FOUR PLAYS, OR MORAL REPRESENTATIONS, IN ONE.	—	—	—	—	—	505



THE MAID'S TRAGEDY, Act V.



*This for my Lord Amintor!
This for my noble brother! and this stroke
For the most wrong'd of women!*

Wale delin.

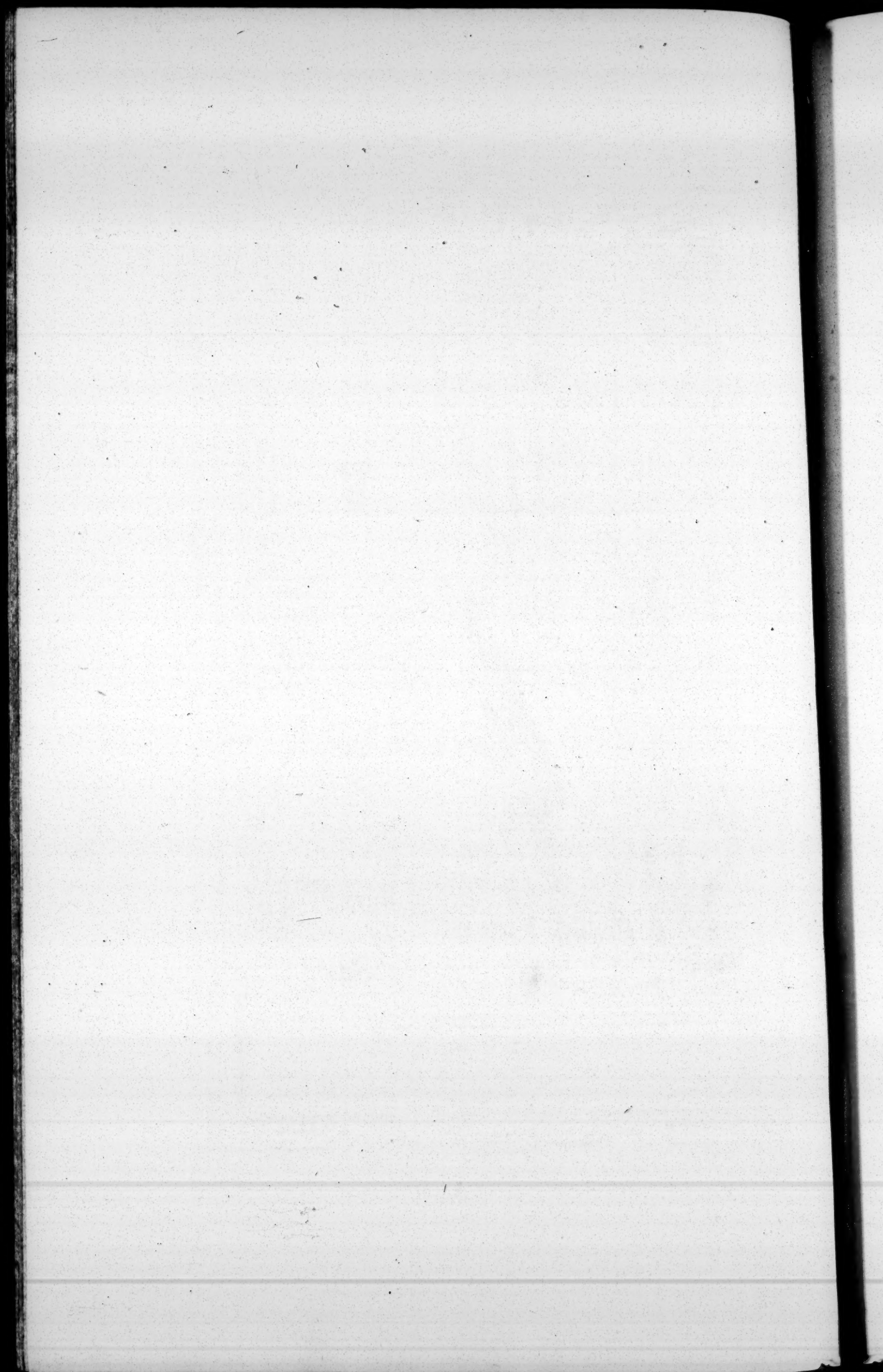
Collyer Sculp.

T H E

MAID'S TRAGEDY.

The first edition we meet with of this Tragedy was printed in 1619.

The Commendatory Verses by Howard, Stanley, Herrick, and Waller, speak of Fletcher as the sole Author of it; those by Earle, ascribe it to Beaumont; but it is generally believed to be their joint production. It always met with great applause till the reign of Charles II. who forbid its representation. Mr. Waller then wrote a new fifth act, rendering the catastrophe fortunate, which is printed in a volume of that gentleman's poems; and with which Langbaine, and all the dramatic historiographers since, assert it was again brought on the stage, and received as much applause as ever. But this revival is much doubted; because Mr. Fenton, in his notes on Waller, says, he had been assured by his friend Southerne, that, in the latter end of Charles II.'s reign, he had seen this play acted at the Theatre-Royal, as it was originally written by Fletcher; but never with Waller's alterations.



DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

M E N.

King.

Lyfippus, *brother to the king.*

Amintor, *a noble gentleman.*

Melantius, } *brothers to Evadne.*

Diphilus, }

Calianax, *an old humourous lord, and father to Aspatia.*

Cleon, } *gentlemen.*

Strato, }

Diagoras, *a servant to Calianax.*

W O M E N.

Evadne, *wife to Amintor.*

Aspatia, *troth-plight wife to Amintor.*

Antiphila, } *waiting-gentlewomen to Aspatia.*

Olympias, }

Dula, *a lady.*

Night, } *masquers.*

Cynthia, }

Neptune, }

Æolus, }

SCENE, RHODES.



T H E

M A I D ' s T R A G E D Y .

A C T I .

Enter Cleon, Strato, Lysippus, and Diphilus.

Cleon. **T**H E rest are making ready, Sir.

Lys. So let them ; there's time
enough.

Diph. You are the brother to the king, my lord ;
we'll take your word.

Lys. Strato, thou hast some skill in poetry :
What think'st thou of the masque¹ ? will it be well ?

Strat. As well as masque can be.

Lys. As masque can be ?

Strat. Yes ; they must commend their king, and
speak in praise of the assembly ; bless the bride and
bridegroom, in person of some god. They're ty'd to
rules of flattery.

Cle. See, good my lord, who is return'd !

Enter Melantius.

Lys. Noble Melantius ! the land, by me,
Welcomes thy virtues home to Rhodes.

¹ *What think'st thou of a masque ?*] It should be, *the* masque. It was not then to be formed ; nor does the prince mean to ask, whether it will be well to have one ; but whether this, which is prepared, will be a good one. This Strato's answer and the sequel of the play plainly shew.

Mr. Seward.

6 THE MAID'S TRAGEDY.

Thou, that with blood abroad buy'st us our peace!
The breath of kings is like the breath of gods;
My brother wish'd thee here, and thou art here.
He will be too kind, and weary thee with
Often welcomes. But the time doth give thee
A welcome above his, or all the world's.

Mel. My lord, my thanks; but these scratch'd
limbs of mine

Have spoke my love and truth unto my friends,
More than my tongue e'er could. My mind's the same
It ever was to you: Where I find worth,
I love the keeper till he let it go,
And then I follow it.

Dipb. Hail, worthy brother!
He, that rejoices not at your return
In safety, is mine enemy for ever.

Mel. I thank thee, Diphilus. But thou art faulty;
I sent for thee to exercise thine arms
With me at Patria: Thou cam'st not, Diphilus;
'Twas ill.

Dipb. My noble brother, my excuse
Is my king's straight command; which you, my lord,
Can witness with me.

Lys. 'Tis true, Melantius;
He might not come, till the solemnity
Of this great match was past.

Dipb. Have you heard of it?

Mel. Yes. I have given cause to those, that
Envy my deeds abroad, to call me gamesome:
I have no other business here at Rhodes.

Lys. We have a masque to-night, and you must tread
A soldier's measure.

Mel. These soft and silken wars are not for me:
The music must be shrill, and all confus'd,
That stirs my blood; and then I dance with arms.
But is Amintor wed?

Dipb. This day.

Mel. All joys upon him! for he is my friend.
Wonder not that I call a man so young my friend:

His

THE MAID'S TRAGEDY.

7

His worth is great; valiant he is, and temperate;
And one that never thinks his life his own,
If his friend need it. When he was a boy,
As oft as I return'd (as, without boast,
I brought home conquest) he would gaze upon me,
And view me round, to find in what one limb
The virtue lay to do those things he heard.
Then would he wish to see my sword, and feel
The quickness of the edge, and in his hand
Weigh it: He oft would make me smile at this.
His youth did promise much, and his ripe years
Will see it all perform'd.

Enter Aspatia, passing by.

Hail, maid and wife!
Thou fair Aspatia, may the holy knot
That thou hast ty'd to-day, last till the hand
Of age undo it! may'st thou bring a race
Unto Amintor, that may fill the world
Successively with soldiers!

Asp. My hard fortunes
Deserve not scorn; for I was never proud,
When they were good.

[*Exit.*

Mel. How's this?

Lys. You are mistaken,
For she is not married.

Mel. You said Amintor was.

Diph. 'Tis true; but——

Mel. Pardon me, I did receive
Letters at Patria from my Amintor,
That he should marry her.

Diph. And so it stood
In all opinion long; but your arrival
Made me imagine you had heard the change.

Mel. Who hath he taken then?

Lys. A lady, Sir,
That bears the light above her, and strikes dead
With flashes of her eye: the fair Evadne,
Your virtuous sister.

A 4

Mel.

8 THE MAID'S TRAGEDY.

Mel. Peace of heart betwixt them !
But this is strange.

Lys. The king my brother did it
To honour you ; and these solemnities
Are at his charge.

Mel. 'Tis royal, like himself. But I am sad
My speech bears so unfortunate a sound
To beautiful Aspatia. There is rage
Hid in her father's breast, Calianax,
Bent long against me ; and he should not think,
If I could call it back, that I would take
So base revenges, as to scorn the state
Of his neglected daughter. Holds he still
His greatness with the king ?

Lys. Yes. But this lady
Walks discontented, with her watry eyes
Bent on the earth. The unfrequented woods
Are her delight ; and when she sees a bank
Stuck full of flowers, she with a sigh will tell
Her servants what a pretty place it were
To bury lovers in ; and make her maids
Pluck 'em, and strew her over like a corse.
She carries with her an infectious grief,
'That strikes all her beholders ; she will sing
The mournful'st things that ever ear hath heard,
And sigh, and sing again ; and when the rest
Of our young ladies, in their wanton blood,
Tell mirthful tales in course, that fill the room
With laughter, she will with so sad a look
Bring forth a story of the silent death
Of some forsaken virgin, which her grief
Will put in such a phrase, that, ere she end,
She'll send them weeping one by one away.

Mel. She has a brother ² under my command,
Like

² *She has a brother, &c.*] The critics, in all ages, upon dramatic poems, have laid it down for a rule, that an *incident* should be prepared, but not prevented ; that is, not foreseen, so as to take off the surprize : For then the whole pleasure of the *incident* is pall'd, and has no effect upon

Like her ; a face as womanish as hers ;
But with a spirit that hath much out-grown
The number of his years.

Enter Amintor.

Cle. My lord, the bridegroom !

Mel. I might run fiercely, not more hastily,
Upon my foe. I love thee well, Amintor ;
My mouth is much too narrow for my heart ;
I joy to look upon those eyes of thine ;
Thou art my friend, but my disorder'd speech
Cuts off my love.

Amin. Thou art Melantius ;
All love is spoke in that. A sacrifice,
To thank the gods Melantius is return'd
In safety ! Victory sits on his sword,
As she was wont : May she build there and dwell ;
And may thy armour be, as it hath been,
Only thy valour and thy innocence !
What endless treasures would our enemies give,
That I might hold thee still thus !

upon the audience or readers. These preparatives, therefore, must seem by chance to the spectators, though they are always designedly thrown in by the poet. "*In multis œconomia comicorum poetarum ita se habet, ut casu putet spectator venisse quod consilio scriptorum factum sit :*" says Donatus upon Terence. This is the most artful preparation, that I remember in all Beaumont and Fletcher's plays, for an *incident* which is in no kind suspected. Melantius says, he has a brother of Aspatia under his command, most like her in the softness of face and feature. This brother never appears in any scene through the play : But when Aspatia comes in boy's cloaths to fight with Amintor, to obtain her death from his hand, and tells him,

' For till the chance of war mark'd this smooth face
' With these few blemishes, people would call me
' My sister's picture ; and her, mine ; in short,
' I am the brother to the wrong'd Aspatia ;'

this fore-mention of the brother, here, makes the *incident* the more probable, and striking ; as Amintor must have heard of such a brother, and could have no suspicion that he was going to draw his sword against Aspatia. The audience are equally amused with the fallacy.

Mr. Theobald.

Mel.

10 THE MAID'S TRAGEDY.

Mel. I'm but poor
In words; but credit me, young man, thy mother
Could do no more but weep for joy to see thee
After long absence: All the wounds I have
Fetch'd not so much away, nor all the cries
Of widowed mothers. But this is peace;
And that was war.

Amin. Pardon, thou holy god
Of marriage-bed, and frown not, I am forc'd,
In answer of such noble tears as those,
To weep upon my wedding-day.

Mel. I fear thou'rt grown too fickle; for I hear
A lady mourns for thee; men say, to death;
Forfaken of thee; on what terms, I know not.

Amin. She had my promise; but the king forbad it,
And made me make this worthy change, thy sister,
Accompanied with graces far above her;
With whom I long to lose my lusty youth,
And grow old in her arms.

Mel. Be prosperous!

Enter Messenger.

Mess. My lord, the masquers rage for you.

Lys. We are gone. Cleon, Strato, Diphilus—³

Amin. We'll all attend you⁴. We shall trouble you
With our solemnities.

Mel.

³ Mr. Theobald's edition says here,

Exeunt Lysippus, Cleon, Strato, and Diphilus;

but as we find no authority for this note of direction, we have not ventured to insert it, though we believe our Authors intended those persons to depart at this place.

⁴ *We'll all attend you. We shall, &c.*] An explanation of this and Melantius's speech seems requisite. News being brought that the masquers wait, Lysippus is calling on the company, and Amintor says, 'We'll all attend you.' They depart, and Amintor, turning to Melantius, continues, 'We shall trouble you with [beg you to partake of] our solemnities.' 'No,' replies Melantius; 'though you may laugh at my being so uncourtly, you must excuse me: But I have a mistress to bring to your diversions.' He then enters into a digression

THE MAID'S TRAGEDY.

11

Mel. Not so, Amintor :
But if you laugh at my rude carriage
In peace, I'll do as much for you in war,
When you come thither. Yet I have a mistress
To bring to your delights ; rough tho' I am,
I have a mistress, and she has a heart,
She says ; but, trust me, it is stone, no better ;
There is no place that I can challenge in't⁵.
But you stand still, and here my way lies⁶.

Enter Calianax with Diagoras.

Cal. Diagoras, look to the doors better for shame ;
you let in all the world, and anon the king will rail
at me—why, very well said—by Jove, the king will
have the show i'th' court.

Diag. Why do you swear so, my lord? You know,
he'll have it here.

Cal. By this light, if he be wise, he will not.

Diag. And if he will not be wise, you are forsworn.

Cal. One may wear out his heart with swearing ; and
get thanks on no side. I'll be gone—look to't, who
will.

Diag. My lord, I shall never keep them out. Pray,
stay ; your looks will terrify them.

Cal. My looks terrify them, you coxcomby ass,
you ! I'll be judg'd by all the company, whether thou
hast not a worse face than I.

gression about this mistress ; till recollecting that it was necessary for
Amintor to attend the exhibition, and for him to fetch the lady, he
interrupts himself with ' But I detain you, and neglect my own
' engagement.'

⁵ *There is no place that I can challenge, gentlemen.] Thus the
first edition reads ; Mr. Theobald's,*

There's no place I can challenge gentle in't ;

All the intermediate copies exhibit the reading of the present text.

⁶ At the end of this scene, the old editions say, *exit* ; that of 1711,
exeunt ; Mr. Theobald's, *exeunt severally* ; which, we apprehend,
is the proper reading.

Diag.

12 THE MAID'S TRAGEDY.

Diag. I mean, because they know you and your office.

Cal. Office! I would I could put it off: I am sure I sweat quite through my office. I might have made room at my daughter's wedding: they have near kill'd her among them; and now I must do service for him that hath forsaken her. Serve, that will. *[Exit.]*

Diag. He's so humourous since his daughter was forsaken.—Hark, hark! there, there! so, so! Codes, Codes! *[Knock within.]* What now?

Mel. *[within]* Open the door.

Diag. Who's there?

Mel. *[within]* Melantius.

Diag. I hope your lordship brings no troop with you; for, if you do, I must return them.

Enter Melantius and a Lady.

Mel. None but this lady, Sir.

Diag. The ladies are all plac'd above, save those that come in the king's troop: The best of Rhodes sit there, and there's room.

Mel. I thank you, Sir. When I have seen you plac'd, madam, I must attend the king; but, the masque done, I'll wait on you again.

Diag. Stand back there—room for my lord Melantius—pray, bear back—this is no place for such youths and their trulls—let the doors shut again.—No!—do your heads itch? I'll scratch them for you.—So, now thrust and hang.—Again! who is't now?—I cannot blame my lord Calianax for going away: 'Would he were here! he would run raging among them, and break a dozen wiser heads than his own, in the twinkling of an eye.—What's the news now?

Within.] I pray you, can you help me to the speech of the master-cook?

Diag. If I open the door, I'll cook some of your calves-heads. Peace, rogues!—Again! who is't?

Mel. *[within.]* Melantius.

Enter

Enter Calianax.

Cal. Let him not in.

Diag. O, my lord, I must. Make room there for my lord.

Enter Melantius.

Is your lady plac'd ?

[*To Mel.*

Mel. Yes, Sir,
I thank you. My lord Calianax, well met.
Your causeless hate to me, I hope, is buried.

Cal. Yes, I do service for your sister here,
That brings my own poor child to timeless death ;
She loves your friend Amintor ; such another
False-hearted lord as you.

Mel. You do me wrong,
A most unmanly one, and I am slow
In taking vengeance ! But be well advis'd.

Cal. It may be so. Who plac'd the lady there,
So near the presence of the king ?

Mel. I did.

Cal. My lord, she must not sit there.

Mel. Why ?

Cal. The place is kept for women of more worth.

Mel. More worth than she ? It mis-becomes your age,
And place, to be thus womanish. Forbear !
What you have spoke, I am content to think
The palsy shook your tongue to.

Cal. Why, 'tis well if I stand here to place mens'
wenches.

Mel. I shall forget this place, thy age, my safety,
And, thorough all, cut that poor sickly week,
Thou hast to live, away from thee.

Cal. Nay, I know you can fight for your whore.

Mel. Bate the king, and be he flesh and blood,
He lyes, that says it ! Thy mother at fifteen
Was black and sinful to her.

Diag. Good my lord !

Mel. Some god pluck threescore years from that
fond man,

That

14 THE MAID'S TRAGEDY.

That I may kill him, and not stain mine honour.
It is the curse of soldiers, that in peace
They shall be brav'd by such ignoble men,
As, if the land were troubled, would with tears
And knees beg succour from 'em. 'Would, that blood,
That sea of blood, that I have lost in fight,
Were running in thy veins, that it might make thee
Apt to say less, or able to maintain,
Should'st thou say more! This Rhodes, I see, is nought
But a place privileg'd to do men wrong.

Cal. Ay, you may say your pleasure.

Enter Amintor.

Amin. What vile injury
Has stirr'd my worthy friend, who is as slow
To fight with words as he is quick of hand?

Mel. That heap of age, which I should reverence
If it were temperate; but testy years
Are most contemptible.

Amin. Good Sir, forbear.

Cal. There is just such another as yourself.

Amin. He will wrong you, or me, or any man,
And talk as if he had no life to lose,
Since this our match. The king is coming in:
I would not for more wealth than I enjoy,
He should perceive you raging. He did hear
You were at difference now, which hast'ned him.

Cal. Make room there! [*Hautboys play within.*]

Enter King, Evadne, Aspatia, lords and ladies.

King. Melantius, thou art welcome, and my love
Is with thee still: But this is not a place
To brabble in. Calianax, join hands.

Cal. He shall not have my hand.

King. This is no time
To force you to it. I do love you both:
Calianax, you look well to your office;
And you, Melantius, are welcome home.
Begin the masque!

Mel.

THE MAID'S TRAGEDY. 15

Mel. Sister, I joy to see you, and your choice.
You look'd with my eyes when you took that man:
Be happy in him! [*Recorders play.*]

Evad. O, my dearest brother!
Your presence is more joyful, than this day
Can be unto me.

T H E M A S Q U E.

Night rises in mists.

Night. **O**UR reign is come; for in the raging sea
The sun is drown'd, and with him fell the day.
Bright Cinthia, hear my voice; I am the Night,
For whom thou bear'st about thy borrow'd light.
Appear; no longer thy pale visage shroud,
But strike thy silver horns quite ⁷ through a cloud,
And send a beam upon my swarthy face;
By which I may discover all the place
And persons, and how many longing eyes
Are come to wait on our solemnities.

Enter Cinthia.

How dull and black am I! I could not find
This beauty without thee, I am so blind.
Methinks, they shew like to those eastern streaks
That warn us hence, before the morning breaks?
Back, my pale servant, for these eyes know how
To shoot far more and quicker rays than thou.

Cinth. Great queen, they be a troop for whom alone
One of my clearest moons I have put on;
A troop, that looks as if thyself and I
Had pluck'd our reins in, and our whips laid by,
To gaze upon these mortals, that appear
Brighter than we.

Night. Then let us keep 'em here;

⁷ Quite thro' a cloud.] This is the reading of all the copies; but we think *quick* would be a much better word, and therefore more likely to have been used by our Authors.

And

16 THE MAID'S TRAGEDY.

And never more our chariots drive away,
But hold our places, and out-shine the day.

Cinth. Great queen of shadows, you are pleas'd to
speak

Of more than may be done: We may not break
The gods' decrees; but, when our time is come,
Must drive away, and give the day our room⁸.

Night. Then shine at full, fair queen, and by thy
pow'r

Produce a birth, to crown this happy hour,
Of nymphs and shepherds: Let their songs discover,
Easy and sweet, who is a happy lover.

Or, if thou woo't, then call thine own Endymion,
From the sweet flow'ry bed he lies upon,
On Latmus' top, thy pale beams drawn away;
And of this long night let him make a day.

Cinth. Thou dream'st, dark queen; that fair boy
was not mine,

Nor went I down to kiss him. Ease and wine
Have bred these bold tales: Poets, when they rage,
Turn gods to men, and make an hour an age.

⁸ To this speech of Cinthia the ten following lines are first added in the edition of 1630, fifteen years after the death of Beaumont, five after that of Fletcher. They have maintained their situation in the text ever since; but as we apprehend they contain not the least poetic fire, nor ingenious imagery, which can entitle them to a place with the other parts of this masque, or induce us to believe they came from either Beaumont's or Fletcher's pen, we have ventured to remove them to this place; and apprehend, if any apology is necessary, it must be for not totally cutting off their association with the writings of such deservedly-admired poets.

- ' Yet, while our reign lasts, let us stretch our pow'r
- ' To give our servants one contented hour,
- ' With such unwonted solemn grace and state,
- ' As may for ever after force them hate
- ' Our brother's glorious beams; and wish the night
- ' Crown'd with a thousand stars, and our cold light:
- ' For almost all the world their service bend
- ' To Phœbus, and in vain my light I lend;
- ' Gaz'd on unto my setting from my rise
- ' Almost of none, but of unquiet eyes.'

But

THE MAID'S TRAGEDY. 17

But I will give a greater state and glory,
And raise to time a noble memory
Of what these lovers are. Rise, rise, I say,
Thou pow'r of deeps; thy surges lade away⁹,
Neptune, great king of waters, and by me
Be proud to be commanded.

Neptune rises.

Nept. Cinthia, see,
Thy word hath fetch'd me hither: Let me know,
Why I ascend?

Cinth. Doth this majestic show
Give thee no knowledge yet?

Nept. Yes, now I see
Something intended, Cinthia, worthy thee.
Go on; I'll be a helper.

Cinth. Hie thee then,
And charge the wind fly from his rocky den.
Let loose thy subjects; only Boreas,
Too foul for our intention, as he was,
Still keep him fast chain'd: We must have none here
But vernal blasts, and gentle winds appear;
Such as blow flow'rs, and thro' the glad boughs sing
Many soft welcomes to the lusty spring:
These are our music. Next, thy watry race
Bring on in couples (we are pleas'd to grace
This noble night), each in their richest things
Your own deeps, or the broken vessel, brings¹⁰.

Be

⁹ *Thy surges laid away.*] The printed word hitherto has been laid; but I think it scarce sense. Neptune in leaving the ocean is never supposed either to bring his surges with him, or lay them aside, but barely to leave them. The word *lade* will signify his parting the waves with his trident to give him a free passage; which is an image quite poetical!

Mr. Seaward.

¹⁰ It has been suggested to us, by a gentleman whose judgment we have the greatest reason to rely on, and whose assistance we are happy to enjoy, that this passage wants explanation. We apprehend it means, 'Bring on in couples your watry race, naiads, tritons, &c.

18 THE MAID'S TRAGEDY.

Be prodigal, and I shall be as kind,
And shine at full upon you.

Nept. Ho! the ¹¹ wind-
Commanding Æolus!

Enter Æolus out of a Rock.

Æol. Great Neptune?

Nept. He.

Æol. What is thy will?

Nept. We do command thee free
Favonius, and thy milder winds, to wait
Upon our Cinthia; but tie Boreas straight;
He's too rebellious.

Æol. I shall do it.

Nept. Do ¹².—

Æol. Great master of the flood, and all below,

Thy

' adorned with the richest ornaments your waters naturally produce,
' or which wrecked vessels can furnish them with.' So afterwards,
in Neptune's charge to Æolus, he says, ' Tell them to put on their
' greatest pearls, and the most sparkling stone the *beaten rock*
' breeds.'

¹¹ *Ho! the wind*

Commanding Æolus!] All the editions have mistaken the intention
of the authors here. 'Tis well known Æolus, in poetic fable, was
the master and controulor of the winds; which he was supposed to
keep bound in a cave, and to let loose upon the ocean as he was
commanded by Neptune. He is therefore called here the wind-
commanding Æolus; a compound adjective which must be wrote
with an *hyphen*, as I have reform'd the text. The editors were led
into a mistake by the word being divided, and put into two lines for
the preservation of the rhyme. I ought to take notice, for two
reasons, that both Mr. Seward and Mr. Sympfon join'd with me in
starting this correction: Because it is doing justice to the sagacity of
my friends; and, besides, it is certainly a great confirmation of the
truth of an emendation, where three persons, all distant from one
another, strike out the same observation. *Mr. Theobald.*

¹² In the first edition of this play we read,

Nept. Do, — *master of the flood and all below;*
Thy full command has taken. *Æol.* Ho! the main;
Neptune. *Nept.* Here.

In all the others, the blank between *do* and *master* is filled up with
the

THE MAID'S TRAGEDY. 19

Thy full command has taken.—Ho! the Main!
Neptune!

Nept. Here.

Æol. Boreas has broke his chain,
And, struggling, with the rest has got away.

Nept. Let him alone, I'll take him up at sea;
He will not long be thence. Go once again,
And call out of the bottoms of the main
Blue Proteus, and the rest; charge them put on
Their greatest pearls, and the most sparkling stone
The beaten rock breeds¹³; 'till this night is done
By me a solemn honour to the Moon.
Fly, like a full sail.

Æol. I am gone.

Cinth. Dark Night,
Strike a full silence; do a thorough right
To this great chorus; that our music may
Touch high as Heav'n, and make the East break day
At mid-night. [Music.

S O N G.

Cynthia, to thy power and thee;
We obey.
Joy to this great company!
And no day

the word *great*. Mr. Seward would fill it up with *We're*, and give
the speech to Neptune; thus,

Nept. Do.

We're master of the flood, and all below

Thy full command has taken. Æol. Ho! the main!

Neptune!—Nept. Here.

We have followed Mr. Theobald's edition; thinking his mode,
however awkward and hasty the departures and re-entrances of Æolus
may be, preferable to Mr. Seward's conjecture; and also to the older
editions, which cannot be followed; for our Authors could not mean
to make Neptune call Æolus 'master of the flood.'

¹³ *The beaten rock breeds*] The old quarto's read, *beating*; the
edition of 1711, *bearing*; Mr. Theobald's, *beaten*; which we sup-
pose to be the true reading.

THE MAID'S TRAGEDY.

Come to steal this night away,
 'Till the rites of love are ended;
 And the lusty bridegroom say,
 Welcome, light, of all befriended.

Pace out, you watry pow'rs below;
 Let your feet,
 Like the gallies when they row,
 Even beat.
 Let your unknown measures, set
 To the still winds, tell to all,
 That gods are come, immortal, great,
 To honour this great nuptial.

[*The measure.*

S O N G.

Hold back thy hours, dark Night, till we have done;
 The day will come too soon;
 Young maids will curse thee if thou steal'st away,
 And leav'st their losses open to the day:
 Stay, stay, and hide
 The blushes of the bride.
 Stay, gentle Night, and with thy darkness cover
 The kisses of her lover.
 Stay, and confound her tears, and her shrill cryings,
 Her weak denials, vows, and often dyings;
 Stay, and hide all;
 But help not, tho' she call.

Nept. Great queen of us and Heav'n, hear what I
 bring
 To make this hour a full one,
 If not o'ermeasure ¹⁴.

Cinth. Speak, sea's king.

¹⁴ *If not her measure.*] This is the reading of the old quarto's. Mr. Theobald, not comprehending the passage, arbitrarily expunges it. The easy alteration admitted into the text is the emendation of Mr. Seward; which certainly (as he says) 'by a very slight change, restores good sense to the words.'

Nept.

THE MAID'S TRAGEDY. 21

Nept. The ¹⁵ tunes my Amphitrite joys to have,
When they will dance upon the rising wave,
And court me as the fails. My Tritons, play
Music to lead a storm; I'll lead the way.

[*Measure.*

S O N G.

To bed, to bed; come, Hymen, lead the bride,
And lay her by her husband's side:
Bring in the virgins every one,
That grieve to lie alone;
That they may kiss while they may say, a maid;
To-morrow, 'twill be other, kiss'd, and said.
Hesperus be long a-shining,
Whilst these lovers are a-twining.

Æol. Ho! Neptune!

Nept. Æolus!

Æol. The seas go high,
Boreas hath rais'd a storm: Go and apply
Thy trident; else, I prophesy, ere day
Many a tall ship will be cast away.
Descend with all the gods, and all their power ¹⁶,
To strike a calm.

¹⁵ The tunes my *Amphitrite* joys, &c.] The old editions read, *THY* tunes, which is plainly an error of the press. The meaning of the passage is briefly this: Neptune tells Cynthia, that in order to add to the celebrity of the present hour, he has brought those airs, with which *Amphitrite* was wont to be delighted, as the prelude to a storm; and which, accordingly, he orders his tritons to play.

¹⁶ Mr. Theobald remarks, 'As the rhymes are here interrupted, something *must* be lost; a defect which is not to be supplied by conjecture.' However, in that gentleman's edition we find this defect partly supplied; for he reads,

*Descend with all thy Gods, and all their power,
To strike a calm. Cinth.* We thank you for this hour:
My favour to you all. *To gratulate
So great a service, &c.*

We have followed the old copies; from which we never chuse to depart, as Mr. Theobald often does, without any authority, without improving the poetry, or adding to the sense.

22 THE MAID'S TRAGEDY.

Cinth. A thanks to ev'ry one, and to gratulate
So great a service, done at my desire,
Ye shall have many floods, fuller and higher
Than you have wished for; no ebb shall dare
To let the day see where your dwellings are.
Now back unto your government in haste,
Lest your proud charge should swell above the waste,
And win upon the island.

Nept. We obey.

[*Neptune descends, and the sea-gods.*

Cinth. Hold up thy head, dead Night; see'st thou
not Day?
The East begins to lighten: I must down,
And give my brother place.

Night. Oh, I could frown
To see the Day, the Day that flings his light
Upon my kingdom, and contemns old Night!
Let him go on and flame! I hope to see
Another wild-fire in his axletree;
And all fall drench'd. But I forgot; speak, queen.
The day grows on; I must no more be seen.

Cinth. Heave up thy drowsy head again, and see
A greater light, a greater majesty,
Between our set and us¹⁷! Whip up thy team!
The day-break's here, and yon sun-flaring beam

¹⁷ *Between our set and us;*] This is nonsense. The Night and Cinthia both talk of the morning's approach, and that they must go down; till the latter finds out, that they are only the rays of light shot from the king and court, which they mistook for the day-break. Hence it's plain, it should be wrote—*Between our set and us; i. e.* our setting, or, going down. *Mr. Seward.*

We admit the justice of Mr. Seward's explanation of the sense of this passage; but do not see the necessity for any alteration. We have therefore followed the old copies; which only imply, by an extravagant compliment, that the brightness of the court transcends that of the Sun, and is more repugnant to Night and her attendants than even the splendor of the Day.

Shot

THE MAID'S TRAGEDY. 23

Shot from the South. Say, which way wilt thou go?

Night. I'll vanish into mists.

Cinth. I into day. [*Exeunt.*]

THE MASQUE ENDS.

King. Take lights there. Ladies, get the bride to bed.

We will not see you laid. Good-night, Amintor;

We'll ease you of that tedious ceremony.

Were it my case, I should think time run slow.

If thou be'st noble, youth, get me a boy,

That may defend my kingdom from my foes.

Amin. All happiness to you.

King. Good-night, Melantius. [*Exeunt.*]

A C T II.

Enter Evadne, Aspatia, Dula, and other ladies.

Dula. **M**ADAM, shall we undress you for this fight?

The wars are naked, you must make to-night.

Evad. You are very merry, Dula.

Dula. I should be merrier far, if 'twere
With me as 'tis with you.

Evad. How's that?

Dula. That I might go to bed with him
Wi' th' credit that you do¹⁸.

Evad. Why, how now, wench?

Dula. Come, ladies, will you help?

¹⁸ Mr. Theobald apprehends (we think with reason) that these and Dula's two preceding lines form a stanza of some old known ballad.

24 THE MAID'S TRAGEDY.

Evad. I am soon undone.

Dula. And as soon done:

Good store of clothes will trouble you at both.

Evad. Art thou drunk, Dula?

Dula. Why, here's none but we.

Evad. Thou think'st, belike, there is no modesty
When we are alone.

Dula. Ay, by my troth, you hit my thoughts aright.

Evad. You prick me, lady.

Dula. 'Tis against my will.

Anon you must endure more, and lie still;
You're best to practise.

Evad. Sure, this wench is mad.

Dula. No, faith, this is a trick that I have had
Since I was fourteen.

Evad. 'Tis high time to leave it.

Dula. Nay, now I'll keep it, 'till the trick leave me.
A dozen wanton words, put in your head,
Will make you livelier in your husband's bed.

Evad. Nay, faith, then take it.

Dula. Take it, madam? where?

We all, I hope, will take it, that are here,

Evad. Nay, then, I'll give you o'er,

Dula. So will I make

The ablest man in Rhodes, or his heart ake.

Evad. Wilt take my place to-night?

Dula. I'll hold your cards 'gainst any two I know,

Evad. What wilt thou do?

Dula. Madam, we'll do't, and make 'em leave
play too.

Evad. Aspatia, take her part.

Dula. I will refuse it.

She will pluck down aside; she does not use it.

Evad. Why, do.

Dula. You will find the play

Quickly, because your head lies well that way.

Evad. I thank thee, Dula, 'Would, thou could'st
instil

Some of thy mirth into Aspatia!

Nothing

Nothing but sad thoughts in her breast do dwell:
Methinks, a mean betwixt you would do well.

Dula. She is in love: Hang me, if I were so,
But I could run my country. I love, too,
To do those things that people in love do.

Asp. It were a timeless smile should prove my cheek:
It were a fitter hour for me to laugh,
When at the altar the religious priest
Were pacifying the offended powers
With sacrifice, than now. This should have been
My night; and all your hands have been employ'd
In giving me a spotless offering
To young Amintor's bed, as we are now
For you. Pardon, Evadne; 'would, my worth
Were great as yours, or that the king, or he,
Or both, thought so! Perhaps, he found me worthless:
But, till he did so, in these ears of mine,
These credulous ears, he pour'd the sweetest words
That art or love could frame. If he were false,
Pardon it, Heaven! and if I did want
Virtue, you safely may forgive that too;
For I have lost none that I had from you.

Evad. Nay, leave this sad talk, madam.

Asp. 'Would, I could! then should I leave the cause.

Evad. See, if you have not spoil'd all Dula's mirth.

Asp. Thou think'st thy heart hard; but if thou
be'st caught,

Remember me; thou shalt perceive a fire
Shot suddenly into thee.

Dula. That's not so good; let 'em shoot any thing
but fire, I fear 'em not.

Asp. Well, wench, thou may'st be taken.

Evad. Ladies, good-night: I'll do the rest myself.

Dula. Nay, let your lord do some.

Asp. Lay a garland on my hearse,
Of the dismal yew.

Evad. That's one of your sad songs, madam.

Asp. Believe me, 'tis a very pretty one.

Evad.

26 THE MAID'S TRAGEDY,

Evad. How is it, madam?

S O N G.

Asp. Lay a garland on my hearse,
Of the dismal yew;
Maidens, willow branches bear;
Say, I died true:
My love was false, but I was firm
From my hour of birth.
Upon my buried body lie
Lightly, gentle earth!

Evad. Fie on't, madam! the words are so strange,
they are able to make one dream of hobgoblins. 'I
could never have the pow'r:' Sing that, Dula.

Dula. I could never have the pow'r
To love one above an hour,
But my heart would prompt mine eye
On some other man to fly:
Venus, fix thou mine eyes fast,
Or if not, give me all that I shall see at last.

Evad. So, leave me now.

Dula. Nay, we must see you laid.

Asp. Madam, good-night. May all the marriage-
joys

That longing maids imagine in their beds,
Prove so unto you. May no discontent
Grow 'twixt your love and you! But, if there do,
Enquire of me, and I will guide your moan;
Teach you an artificial way to grieve,
To keep your sorrow waking. Love your lord
No worse than I; but if you love so well,
Alas, you may displease him; so did I.
This is the last time you shall look on me.
Ladies, farewell. As soon as I am dead,
Come all, and watch one night about my hearse;
Bring each a mournful story, and a tear,
To offer at it when I go to earth.

With

THE MAID'S TRAGEDY.

27

With flatt'ring ivy clasp my coffin round ;
Write on my brow my fortune ; let my bier
Be borne by virgins that shall sing, by course,
The truth of maids, and perjuries of men.

Evad. Alas, I pity thee.

[*Exit Evad.*

Omnes. Madam, good-night.

1 *Lady.* Come, we'll let in the bridegroom.

Dula. Where's my lord ?

Enter Amintor.

1 *Lady.* Here, take this light.

Dula. You'll find her in the dark.

1 *Lady.* Your lady's scarce a-bed yet ; you must
help her.

Asp. Go, and be happy in your lady's love.
May all the wrongs, that you have done to me,
Be utterly forgotten in my death !
I'll trouble you no more ; yet I will take
A parting kiss, and will not be deny'd.
You'll come, my lord, and see the virgins weep
When I am laid in earth, though you yourself
Can know no pity. Thus I wind myself
Into this willow garland, and am prouder
That I was once your love, though now refus'd,
Than to have had another true to me.
So with my prayers I leave you, and must try
Some yet-unpractis'd way to grieve and die. [*Exit.*

Dula. Come, ladies, will you go ?

Omnes. Good-night, my lord.

Amin. Much happiness unto you all ! [*Exeunt ladies.*
I did that lady wrong . Methinks, I feel
Her grief shoot suddenly through all my veins.
Mine eyes run : This is strange at such a time.
It was the king first mov'd me to't ; but he
Has not my will in keeping. Why do I
Perplex myself thus ? Something whispers me,
' Go not to bed.' My guilt is not so great
As my own conscience, too sensible,
Would make me think : I only brake a promise,
And

28 THE MAID'S TRAGEDY.

And 'twas the king that forc'd me. Tim'rous flesh,
Why shak'st thou so? Away, my idle fears!

Enter Evadne.

Yonder she is, the lustre of whose eye
Can blot away the sad remembrance
Of all these things. Oh, my Evadne, spare
That tender body; let it not take cold.
'The vapours of the night will not fall here;
To bed, my love. Hymen will punish us
For being slack performers of his rites.
Can'st thou to call me?

Evad. No.

Amin. Come, come, my love,
And let us loose ourselves to one another.
Why art thou up so long?

Evad. I am not well.

Amin. To bed then; let me wind thee in these arms,
'Till I have banish'd sickness.

Evad. Good my lord,
I cannot sleep.

Amin. Evadne, we will watch;
I mean no sleeping.

Evad. I'll not go to bed.

Amin. I prithee, do.

Evad. I will not for the world.

Amin. Why, my dear love?

Evad. Why? I have sworn I will not.

Amin. Sworn!

Evad. Ay.

Amin. How! sworn, Evadne?

Evad. Yes, sworn, Amintor;
And will swear again, if you will wish to hear me.

Amin. To whom have you sworn this?

Evad. If I should name him, the matter were not
great.

Amin. Come, this is but the coyness of a bride.

Evad. The coyness of a bride?

Amin. How prettily that frown becomes thee.

Evad.

Evad. Do you like it so?

Amin. Thou canst not dress thy face in such a look,
But I shall like it.

Evad. What look likes you best?

Amin. Why do you ask?

Evad. That I may shew you one less pleasing to you.

Amin. How's that?

Evad. That I may shew you one less pleasing to you.

Amin. I prithee, put thy jests in milder looks.
It shews as thou wert angry.

Evad. So, perhaps,
I am indeed.

Amin. Why, who has done thee wrong?
Name me the man, and by thyself I swear,
Thy yet-unconquer'd self, I will revenge thee.

Evad. Now I shall try thy truth. If thou dost
love me,
Thou weigh'st not any thing compar'd with me:
Life, honour, joys eternal, all delights
This world can yield, or hopeful people feign,
Or in the life to come, are light as air
To a true lover when his lady frowns,
And bids him *do this*. Wilt thou kill this man?
Swear, my Amintor, and I'll kiss the sin
Off from thy lips.

Amin. I will not swear, sweet love,
Till I do know the cause.

Evad. I would, thou would'st.
Why, it is thou that wrong'st me; I hate thee;
Thou should'st have kill'd thyself.

Amin. If I should know that, I should quickly kill
The man you hated.

Evad. Know it then, and do't.

Amin. Oh, no; what look soe'er thou shalt put on
To try my faith, I shall not think thee false:
I cannot find one blemish in thy face,
Where falsehood should abide. Leave, and to bed.
If you have sworn to any of the virgins,
That were your old companions, to preserve

Your

30 THE MAID'S TRAGEDY.

Your maidenhead a night, it may be done
Without this means.

Evad. A maidenhead, Amintor,
At my years ¹⁹?

Amin. Sure, she raves. This cannot be
Thy natural temper. Shall I call thy maids?
Either thy healthful sleep hath left thee long,
Or else some fever rages in thy blood.

Evad. Neither, Amintor: Think you I am mad,
Because I speak the truth?

Amin. Will you not lie with me to-night?

Evad. To-night! you talk as if I would hereafter.

Amin. Hereafter! yes, I do.

Evad. You are deceiv'd.

Put off amazement, and with patience mark
What I shall utter; for the oracle

¹⁹ — *A maidenhead, Amintor,*

At my years?] Mr. Rhymer, (in his *Tragedies* of the last age consider'd and examin'd by the practice of the *ancients*) not without justice exclaims against the effrontery and impudence of Evadne's character. But as the colouring of his critical reflections is generally so gross and glaring, I shall refer those readers, who have curiosity enough, to his book, without quoting from him on this subject.

Mr. Theobald.

Mr. Theobald allows the justice of Mr. Rhymer's exclamation at the effrontery and impudence of Evadne's character; as if the poets were not as sensible of it as Mr. Rhymer, and had not sufficiently punished her for it. The anger of these gentlemen at the *character*, is the very passion designed to be raised by it; but they mistook the *object* of their anger, and were as much in the wrong as an audience would be, who were violently angry with a good player for representing Macbeth, Iago, or Richard, as such consummate villains. The questions which a critic should ask are, *whether the character is natural?* and *whether proper for the stage or not?* As to the first; Nature, we fear, gives but too many sad examples of such effrontery in women, who, when abandoned to their vices, are observed to be sometimes more rebroate in them than the worst of men. Beside this, there is a remarkable beauty in the effrontery and haughtiness of Evadne's character; she has a *family likeness* to her brother; she is a *female* Melantius depraved by vicious love. And if there are any of her expressions which seem now too gross for the stage, it is sufficient to say, they were far from being thought gross in the age they were wrote.

Mr. Seward.

Much in support of this observation may be seen in Mr. Seward's preface.

Knows

Knows nothing truer : 'tis not for a night,
Or two, that I forbear thy bed, but for ever.

Amin. I dream ! Awake, Amintor !

Evad. You hear right.

I sooner will find out the beds of snakes,
And with my youthful blood warm their cold flesh,
Letting them curl themselves about my limbs,
Than sleep one night with thee. This is not feign'd,
Nor sounds it like the coyness of a bride.

Amin. Is flesh so earthly to endure all this ?
Are these the joys of marriage ? Hymen, keep
This story (that will make succeeding youth
Neglect thy ceremonies) from all ears ;
Let it not rise up, for thy shame and mine,
To after-ages : We will scorn thy laws,
If thou no better bless them. Touch the heart
Of her that thou hast sent me, or the world
Shall know : There's not an altar that will smoke
In praise of thee ; we will adopt us sons ;
Then virtue shall inherit, and not blood.
If we do lust, we'll take the next we meet,
Serving ourselves as other creatures do ;
And never take note of the female more,
Nor of her issue. I do rage in vain ;
She can but jest. O, pardon me, my love !
So dear the thoughts are that I hold of thee,
That I must break forth. Satisfy my fear ;
It is a pain, beyond the hand of death,
To be in doubt : Confirm it with an oath,
If this be true.

Evad. Do you invent the form :
Let there be in it all the binding words
Devils and conjurers can put together,
And I will take it. I have sworn before,
And here, by all things holy, do again,
Never to be acquainted with thy bed.
Is your doubt over now ?

Amin. I know too much, 'Would I had doubted
still !

Was

32 THE MAID'S TRAGEDY.

Was ever such a marriage-night as this !
 Ye pow'rs above, if you did ever mean
 Man should be us'd thus, you have thought a way
 How he may bear himself, and save his honour.
 Instruct me in it ; for to my dull eyes
 There is no mean, no moderate course to run :
 I must live scorn'd, or be a murderer.
 Is there a third ? Why is this night so calm ²⁰ ?
 Why does not Heaven speak in thunder to us,
 And drown her voice ?

Evad. This rage will do no good.

Amin. Evadne, hear me : Thou hast ta'en an oath,
 But such a rash one, that, to keep it, were
 Worse than to swear it : Call it back to thee ;
 Such vows as those never ascend the Heav'n ;
 A tear or two will wash it quite away.
 Have mercy on my youth, my hopeful youth,
 If thou be pitiful ; for, without boast,
 This land was proud of me. What lady was there,
 That men call'd fair and virtuous in this isle,
 That would have shun'd my love ? It is in thee
 To make me hold this worth. Oh ! we vain men,
 That trust out all our reputation,
 To rest upon the weak and yielding hand
 Of feeble woman ! But thou art not stone ;
 Thy flesh is soft, and in thine eyes doth dwell
 The spirit of love ; thy heart cannot be hard.
 Come, lead me from the bottom of despair,
 To all the joys thou hast ; I know, thou wilt ;
 And make me careful, lest the sudden change
 O'ercome my spirits.

Evad. When I call back this oath,

²⁰ — *Why is this night so calm ?*

Why does not Heaven speak in thunder to us ?] The Poets seem manifestly to have had in their eye this passage of Seneca, in his Hippolytus.

— *Magne regnator Delum,
 Tam lentus audis scelera ? tam lentus vides ?
 Ecquando sævâ fulmen emittes manu,
 Si nunc serenum est ?*

Mr. Theobald.

The

The pains of hell environ me!

Amin. I sleep, and am too temp'rate! Come to bed!
Or by those hairs, which, if thou hadst a soul
Like to thy locks, were threads for kings to wear
About their arms——

Evad. Why, so, perhaps, they are.

Amin. I'll drag thee to my bed, and make thy
tongue

Undo this wicked oath, or on thy flesh
I'll print a thousand wounds to let out life!

Evad. I fear thee not. Do what thou dar'st to me!
Ev'ry ill-sounding word, or threat'ning look,
Thou shew'st to me, will be reveng'd at full.

Amin. It will not sure, Evadne?

Evad. Do not you hazard that.

Amin. Have you your champions?

Evad. Alas, Amintor, think'st thou I forbear
To sleep with thee, because I have put on
A maiden's strictness? Look upon these cheeks,
And thou shalt find the hot and rising blood
Unapt for such a vow. No; in this heart
There dwells as much desire, and as much will
To put that wish'd act in practice, as ever yet
Was known to woman; and they have been shewn,
Both. But it was the folly of thy youth
To think this beauty, to what land foe'er
It shall be call'd, shall stoop to any second.
I do enjoy the best, and in that height
Have sworn to stand or die: You guess the man.

Amin. No; let me know the man that wrongs me so,
That I may cut his body into motes,
And scatter it before the northern wind.

Evad. You dare not strike him.

Amin. Do not wrong me so.
Yes, if his body were a pois'nous plant,
That it were death to touch, I have a soul
Will throw me on him.

Evad. Why, it is the king.

Amin. The king!

32 THE MAID'S TRAGEDY.

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 Ye pow'rs above, if you did ever mean
 Man should be us'd thus, you have thought a way
 How he may bear himself, and save his honour.
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There dwells as much desire, and as much will
To put that wish'd act in practice, as ever yet
Was known to woman; and they have been shewn,
Both. But it was the folly of thy youth
To think this beauty, to what land foe'er
It shall be call'd, shall stoop to any second.
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Have sworn to stand or die: You guess the man.

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That I may cut his body into motes,
And scatter it before the northern wind.

Evad. You dare not strike him.

Amin. Do not wrong me so.
Yes, if his body were a pois'nous plant,
That it were death to touch, I have a soul
Will throw me on him.

Evad. Why, it is the king.

Amin. The king!

34 THE MAID'S TRAGEDY.

Evad. What will you do now?

Amin. 'Tis not the king!

Evad. What did he make this match for, dull Amintor?

Amin. Oh, thou hast nam'd a word, that wipes away All thoughts revengeful! In that sacred name, 'The king,' there lies a terror. What frail man Dares lift his hand against it? Let the gods Speak to him when they please; 'till when, let us Suffer, and wait.

Evad. Why should you fill yourself so full of heat, And haste so to my bed? I am no virgin.

Amin. What devil put it in thy fancy, then, To marry me?

Evad. Alas, I must have one To father children, and to bear the name Of husband to me, that my sin may be More honourable.

Amin. What a strange thing am I!

Evad. A miserable one; one that myself Am sorry for.

Amin. Why, shew it then in this: If thou hast pity, though thy love be none, Kill me; and all true lovers, that shall live In after-ages cross'd in their desires, Shall bless thy memory, and call thee good; Because such mercy in thy heart was found, To rid a ling'ring wretch.

Evad. I must have one To fill thy room again, if thou wert dead; Else, by this night, I would: I pity thee.

Amin. These strange and sudden injuries have fall'n So thick upon me, that I lose all sense Of what they are. Methinks, I am not wrong'd; Nor is it aught, if from the censuring world I can but hide it. Reputation! Thou art a word, no more.—But thou hast shewn An impudence so high, that to the world, I fear thou wilt betray or shame thyself.

Evad.

Evad. To cover shame, I took thee ; never fear
That I would blaze myself.

Amin. Nor let the king
Know I conceive he wrongs me ; then mine honour
Will thrust me into action, tho' ²¹ my flesh
Could bear with patience. And it is some ease
To me in these extremes, that I knew this
Before I touch'd thee ; else, had all the sins
Of mankind stood betwixt me and the king,
I had gone through 'em to his heart and thine.
I have lost one desire ²² : 'Tis not his crown
Shall buy me to thy bed now, I resolve,
He has dishonour'd thee. Give me thy hand ;
Be careful of thy credit, and sin close ;

²¹ That *my flesh*, &c.] The sense plainly requires *tho'*. 'Tho'
'my nature, says Amintor, could brook the injury, my honour would
'oblige me to revenge it.'

²² *I have left one desire ; ('tis not his crown
Shall buy me to thy bed, now I resolve,
He has dishonour'd thee ;) give me thy hand,*

Be careful, &c.] Thus Mr. Theobald prints these lines, pre-
ferring the word *left* (which he found in no edition but the first)
to *lost*. He has, as appears by his note, misunderstood the whole
passage ; the obvious meaning of which is, ' I have so totally given
'up the desire of consummating our nuptials, that, I resolve, even
'the regal power should not induce me to partake your bed *now*,
'as the king has dishonoured you.' Either word will make sense,
have left meaning *have departed from*, *got rid of*.

Mr. Theobald's explanation is, ' I have one desire *left* ; for it is
'not his crown should buy me to thy bed, now I *resolve*, (*i. e.* am
'resolved, ascertained,) that he has dishonoured thee. The desire
'is, to be careful of her credit, and sin close.' Had this been our
Authors' meaning, they surely would not have so glaringly bid de-
fiance to grammar, as thus wantonly to use an active verb passively ;
we say *wantonly*, because, while the use of it embarrasses the sense,
it does not in the least assist the poetry ; to which *I'm resolv'd* would
have been fully as agreeable ; and, besides, it is most probable they
would have said,

'Tis not his crown
*Shall buy me to thy bed, now I'm convinc'd
He has dishonour'd thee.*

We have followed the majority of the editions ; to which our
principal inducement was, that, as the word *lost* appears so early as
1622, it was probably a correction by Mr. Fletcher.

36 THE MAID'S TRAGEDY.

'Tis all I wish. Upon thy chamber-floor
I'll rest to-night, that morning-visitors
May think we did as married people use.
And, prithee, smile upon me when they come,
And seem to toy, as if thou hadst been pleas'd
With what we did.

Evad. Fear not; I will do this.

Amin. Come, let us practise; and, as wantonly
As ever loving bride and bridegroom met,
Let's laugh and enter here.

Evad. I am content.

Amin. Down all the swellings of my troubled heart!
When we walk thus intwin'd, let all eyes see
If ever lovers better did agree. [*Exeunt.*

*Enter Aspatia, Antiphila and Olympias*²³.

Asp. Away, you are not fad; force it no further.
Good gods, how well you look! Such a full colour
Young bashful brides put on. Sure, you are new
married!

Ant. Yes, madam, to your grief.

Asp. Alas, poor wenches!

Go learn to love first; learn to lose yourselves;
Learn to be flatter'd, and believe, and bless
The double tongue that did it²⁴. Make a faith
Out of the miracles of antient lovers,

²³ Mr. Seward, in his Preface, proposes several alterations in the scene which is now coming on; all of which we intended mentioning, and giving our reasons for dissenting from, as the passages occurred. But as a gentleman, to whose opinion and abilities the greatest respect is due, has remarked to us, that thereby the pages would be so much occupied by notes as would be disagreeable to many readers, when the same observations might appear, with even more propriety, in our Preface, for that we shall reserve them.

²⁴ *The double tongue that did it.*

Make a faith out of the miracles of ancient lovers.

Did you ne'er love yet, wenches? speak Olympias,

Such as speak truth and dy'd in't,

And, like me, believe all faithful, and be miserable;

Thou hast an easy temper, fit for stamp.] The transposition in these lines is prescribed (with great propriety) by Mr. Theobald.

THE MAID'S TRAGEDY. 37

Such as spake truth, and dy'd in't ; and, like me,
Believe all faithful, and be miserable.

Did you ne'er love yet, wenches ? Speak, Olympias :
Thou hast an easy temper, fit for stamp.

Olym. Never.

Asp. Nor you, Antiphila ?

Ant. Nor I.

Asp. Then, my good girls, be more than women,
wife :

At least, be more than I was ; and be sure
You credit any thing the light gives light to,
Before a man. Rather believe the sea
Weeps for the ruin'd merchant, when he roars ;
Rather, the wind courts but the pregnant fails,
When the strong cordage cracks ; rather, the sun
Comes but to kiss the fruit in wealthy Autumn,
When all falls blasted. If you needs must love,
(Forc'd by ill fate) take to your maiden bosoms
Two dead-cold aspicks²⁵, and of them make lovers :
They cannot flatter, nor forswear ; one kiss
Makes a long peace for all. But man,
Oh, that beast man ! Come, let's be sad, my girls !
That down-cast of thine eye, Olympias,
Shews a fine sorrow. Mark, Antiphila ;
Just such another was the nymph CEnone,
When Paris brought home Helen. Now, a tear ;
And then thou art a piece expressing fully
The Carthage queen, when, from a cold sea-rock,
Full with her sorrow, she ty'd fast her eyes
To the fair Trojan ships ; and, having lost them,
Just as thine eyes do, down stole a tear. Antiphila,
What would this wench do, if she were Aspatia ?
Here she would stand, till some more pitying god
Turn'd her to marble ! 'Tis enough, my wench !
Shew me the piece of needlework you wrought.

²⁵ *Two dead cold aspicks.*] These must not be two distinct epithets, but one compound adjective with a hyphen, *dead cold*, i. e. cold as death : for if the aspicks were dead, how could the kiss of them do any hurt ?

Mr. Theobald.

38 THE MAID'S TRAGEDY.

Ant. Of Ariadne, madam?

Asp. Yes, that piece.

This should be Theseus; h'as a coz'ning face:
You meant him for a man?

Ant. He was so, madam.

Asp. Why, then, 'tis well enough. Never look back,
You have a full wind, and a false heart, Theseus!
Does not the story say, his keel was split,
Or his masts spent, or some kind rock or other
Met with his vessel?

Ant. Not as I remember.

Asp. It should have been so. Could the gods know
this,

And not, of all their number, raise a storm?
But they are all as ill! This false smile was
Well express'd; just such another caught me!
You shall not go on so²⁶, Antiphila:
In this place work a quicksand,
And over it a shallow smiling water,
And his ship ploughing it; and then a Fear:
Do that Fear to the life, wench.

Ant. 'Twill wrong the story.

Asp. 'Twill make the story, wrong'd by wanton poets,
Live long, and be believ'd. But where's the lady?

Ant. There, madam.

Asp. Fie! you have mis'd it here, Antiphila;
You are much mistaken, wench:
These colours are not dull and pale enough
To shew a soul so full of misery
As this sad lady's was. Do it by me;
Do it again, by me, the lost Aspatia,
And you shall find all true, but the wild island²⁷.

Suppose

²⁶ *You shall not go so.*] Mr. Seward here restores the verse, by introducing the particle *on*.

²⁷ *And you shall find all true but the wild island.*] Ariadne, the daughter of Minos, king of Crete, it is well known, was desperately in love with Theseus. She by the help of a clue extricated him from the labyrinth to which he was confined; and embark'd with him on his return for Athens: But he ungenerously gave her the drop on the shore

THE MAID'S TRAGEDY. 39

Suppose I stand upon the sea-beach now ²⁸,
 Mine arms thus, and mine hair blown with the wind,
 Wild as that desert; and let all about me
 Tell that I am forsaken ²⁹. Do my face
 (If thou hadst ever feeling of a sorrow)
 Thus, thus, Antiphila: Strive to make me look
 Like Sorrow's monument! And the trees about me,
 Let them be dry and leafless; let the rocks
 Groan with continual surges; and, behind me,
 Make all a desolation. Look, look, wenches!
 A miserable life of this poor picture!

Olym. Dear madam!

Asp. I have done. Sit down; and let us
 Upon that point fix all our eyes; that point there.
 Make a dull silence, till you feel a sudden sadness
 Give us new souls.

Enter Calianax.

Cal. The king may do this, and he may not do it:
 My child is wrong'd, disgrac'd. Well, how now,
 hufwives!

What, at your ease? Is this a time to sit still?

shore of the island Naxos. Aspatia says, her case is in every particular similar, except as to the wild island.

Mr. Theobald.

²⁸ *Suppose, I stand*] This is one of those passages, where the poets, rapt into a glorious enthusiasm, soar on the rapid wings of fancy. Enthusiasm I would call the very essence of poetry, since, without it, neither the happy conduct of the fable, the justness of characters or sentiments, nor the utmost harmony of metre, can altogether form the poet. It is the frequency of such noble flights as these, and their amazing rapidity, that sets the immortal Shakespeare above all other dramatick poets; and suffers none of our own nation in any degree to approach him, but Beaumont and Fletcher.

Mr. Seward.

²⁹ *And let all about me*

Be teares of my story.] Thus reads the oldest copy; from which Mr. Theobald alters the passage to '*be teachers of my story.*' The second edition, printed in Fletcher's time, and every other till Mr. Theobald's, exhibit the reading we have adopted.

Mr. Theobald's reading, however, coming so near that of the oldest copy, and resembling the manner of our Authors, is extremely plausible.

40 THE MAID'S TRAGEDY.

Up, you young lazy whores, up, or I'll swinge you!

Olym. Nay, good my lord.

Cal. You'll lie down shortly. Get you in, and work!
What, are you grown so resty you want heats³⁰?
We shall have some of the court-boys heat you shortly.

Ant. My lord, we do no more than we are charg'd.
It is the lady's pleasure we be thus in grief:
She is forsaken.

Cal. There's a rogue too;
A young dissembling slave! Well, get you in!
I'll have a bout with that boy. 'Tis high time
Now to be valiant: I confess my youth
Was never prone that way. What, made an ass?
A court-stale? Well, I will be valiant,
And beat some dozen of these whelps; I will!
And there's another of 'em, a trim cheating soldier;
I'll maul that rascal; h'as out-brav'd me twice:
But now, I thank the gods, I am valiant.
Go, get you in! I'll take a course with all. [*Exeunt.*]

A C T III.

Enter Cleon, Strato, and Dipbilus.

Cle. **Y**OUR sister is not up yet.

Dipb. Oh, brides must take their morning's rest; the night is troublesome.

Stra. But not tedious.

Dipb. What odds, he has not my sister's maidenhead to-night?

Stra. No; it's odds, against any bridegroom living, he ne'er gets it while he lives.

Dipb. You're merry with my sister; you'll please to allow me the same freedom with your mother.

³⁰ *What, are you grown so resty, &c.*] The old man, in this allusion, compares these young wenches to lazy, resty mares, that want to be rid so many heats.

Mr. Theobald.

Stra.

THE MAID'S TRAGEDY. 41

Stra. She's at your service.

Diph. Then, she's merry enough of herself; she needs no tickling. Knock at the door.

Stra. We shall interrupt them.

Diph. No matter; they have the year before them. Good-morrow, sister! Spare yourself to-day; the night will come again.

Enter Amintor.

Amin. Who's there? my brother! I'm no readier yet. Your sister is but now up.

Diph. You look as you had lost your eyes to-night: I think you have not slept.

Amin. I'faith I have not.

Diph. You have done better, then.

Amin. We ventur'd for a boy: When he is twelve, He shall command against the foes of Rhodes. Shall we be merry?

Stra. You cannot; you want sleep.

Amin. 'Tis true.—But she,
As if she had drank Lethe, or had made
Even with Heav'n, did fetch so still a sleep,
So sweet and sound—— [Aside.

Diph. What's that?

Amin. Your sister frets
This morning; and does turn her eyes upon me,
As people on their headsmen. She does chafe,
And kifs, and chafe again, and clap my cheeks:
She's in another world.

Diph. Then I had lost: I was about to lay
You had not got her maidenhead to night.

Amin. Ha! he does not mock me?—You had lost,
indeed;
I do not use to bungle.

Cleo. You do deserve her.

Amin. I laid my lips to hers, and that wild breath,
That was so rude and rough to me last night,
Was sweet as April. I'll be guilty too,
If these be the effects. [Aside.

Enter

Enter Melantius.

Mel. Good day, Amintor! for, to me, the name
Of brother is too distant: We are friends,
And that is nearer.

Amin. Dear Melantius!
Let me behold thee. Is it possible?

Mel. What sudden gaze is this?

Amin. 'Tis wond'rous strange!

Mel. Why does thine eye desire so strict a view
Of that it knows so well? There's nothing here
That is not thine.

Amin. I wonder much, Melantius,
To see those noble looks, that make me think
How virtuous thou art: And, on the sudden,
'Tis strange to me thou shouldst have worth and
honour;

Or not be base, and false, and treacherous,
And every ill. But——

Mel. Stay, stay, my friend;
I fear this found will not become our loves.
No more; embrace me.

Amin. Oh, mistake me not:
I know thee to be full of all those deeds
That we frail men call good; but, by the course
Of nature, thou shouldst be as quickly chang'd
As are the winds; dissembling as the sea,
That now wears brows as smooth as virgins' be,
Tempting the merchant to invade his face,
And in an hour calls his billows up,
And shoots 'em at the sun, destroying all
He carries on him.—Oh, how near am I
To utter my sick thoughts!

[*Aside.*

Mel. But why, my friend, should I be so by nature?

Amin. I've wed thy sister, who hath virtuous
thoughts
Enough for one whole family; and it is strange
That you should feel no want.

Mel. Believe me, this compliment's too cunning
for me.

Diph.

THE MAID'S TRAGEDY. 43

Diph. What should I be then, by the course of nature,

They having both robb'd me of so much virtue?

Stra. Oh, call the bride, my lord Amintor,
That we may see her blush, and turn her eyes down:
'Tis the prettiest sport!

Amin. Evadne!

Evad. [*within.*] My lord!

Amin. Come forth, my love!
Your brothers do attend to wish you joy.

Evad. I am not ready yet.

Amin. Enough, enough.

Evad. They'll mock me.

Amin. Faith, thou shalt come in.

Enter Evadne.

Mel. Good-morrow, sister! He that understands
Whom you have wed, need not to wish you joy;
You have enough: Take heed you be not proud.

Diph. Oh, sister, what have you done?

Evad. I done! why, what have I done?

Stra. My lord Amintor swears you are no maid now.

Evad. Pish!

Stra. I'faith, he does.

Evad. I knew I should be mock'd.

Diph. With a truth.

Evad. If 'twere to do again, in faith, I would not marry.

Amin. Nor I, by Heav'n. [*Aside.*

Diph. Sister, Dula swears she heard you cry two rooms off.

Evad. Fie, how you talk!

Diph. Let's see you walk, Evadne. By my troth, you're spoil'd³¹.

³¹ *Diph.* Let's see you walk.

Evad. By my troth, you're spoil'd.] This is the reading of all the editions, even Mr. Theobald's. As it is impossible the words thus given to Evadne should be spoken by her, we have varied from the copies, by giving them to her brother.

Mel.

44 THE MAID'S TRAGEDY.

Mel. Amintor !

Amin. Ha ?

Mel. Thou art fad.

Amin. Who, I ? I thank you for that. Shall Diphilus, thou, and I, sing a catch ?

Mel. How !

Amin. Prithee, let's.

Mel. Nay, that's too much the other way.

Amin. I am so light'ned with my happiness !
How dost thou, love ? kiss me.

Evad. I cannot love you, you tell tales of me.

Amin. Nothing but what become us. Gentlemen,
'Would you had all such wives, and all the world,
That I might be no wonder ! You're all fad :
What, do you envy me ? I walk, methinks,
On water, and ne'er sink, I am so light.

Mel. 'Tis well you are so.

Amin. Well ? how can I be other, when she looks
thus.

Is there no music there ? let's dance.

Mel. Why, this is strange, Amintor !

Amin. I do not know myself ;

Yet I could wish my joy were less.

Diph. I'll marry too, if it will make one thus.

Evad. Amintor, hark.

[*Asids.*

Amin. What says my love ? I must obey.

Evad. You do it scurvily, 'twill be perceiv'd.

Cleo. My lord, the king is here.

Enter King and Lysippus.

Amin. Where ?

Stra. And his brother.

King. Good morrow, all !

Amintor, joy on joy fall thick upon thee !
And, madam, you are alter'd since I saw you ;
I must salute you ; you are now another's.
How lik'd you your night's rest ?

Evad. Ill, Sir.

Amin. Ay, 'deed,
She took but little.

Lys.

Lys. You'll let her take more,
And thank her too, shortly.

King. Amintor, wert
Thou truly honest 'till thou wert married?

Amin. Yes, Sir.

King. Tell me, then, how shews the sport unto thee?

Amin. Why, well.

King. What did you do?

Amin. No more, nor less, than other couples use;
You know, what 'tis; it has but a coarse name.

King. But, prithee, ³² I should think, by her black
eye,

And her red cheek, she should be quick and stirring
In this same business; ha?

Amin. I cannot tell; I ne'er try'd other, Sir;
But I perceive she is as quick as you deliver'd.

King. Well, you will trust me then, Amintor,
To chuse a wife for you again?

Amin. No, never, Sir.

King. Why? like you this so ill?

³² *But, prithee, I should think, &c.*] This king is a very vicious character throughout; first, in debauching the sister of his brave and victorious general; and then in marrying her to a young nobleman of great hopes, his general's darling friend; and forcing him to break a contract made with the daughter of his constable, or keeper, of his citadel. But why is his character so monstrously overcharged, that he should, to the impeachment of common decency, question the abused husband about his wife's complexion and vigour in conjugal caresses; and then withdraw her, out of the husband's hearing, to sift whether she had not submitted to let him pay the rites of an husband? This is a piece of conduct so flagrantly impudent, that, abandon'd as we may be in private enormities, even our worst rakes would shew so much deference to the fair sex, as not to let it pass without a rebuke.

Mr. Theobald.

Mr. Theobald is much mistaken in his impeachment of the king's character.—He says, it is monstrously overcharged with vices. But does not history afford us a hundred instances of such royal monsters? Indeed, when a vicious king is once persuaded that he has a *divinity* about him, that protects his *vices* and exalts him above the reach of law or justice, there is no wonder that he should abandon himself to all manner of enormities.

Mr. Seward.

Mr. Theobald's remark is sensible and natural.

Amin.

46 THE MAID'S TRAGEDY.

Amin. So well I like her.

For this I bow my knee in thanks to you,
And unto Heav'n will pay my grateful tribute
Hourly ; and do hope we shall draw out
A long contented life together here,
And die both, full of grey hairs, in one day :
For which the thanks are yours. But if the pow'rs
That rule us please to call her first away,
Without pride spoke, this world holds not a wife
Worthy to take her room.

King. I do not like this.

All forbear the room, but you, Amintor,
And your lady. I have some speech with you,
That may concern your after living well.

Amin. He will not tell me that he lies with her ?
If he do, something heav'nly stay my heart,
For I shall be apt to thrust this arm of mine
To acts unlawful !

King. You will suffer me to talk
With her, Amintor, and not have a jealous pang ?

Amin. Sir, I dare trust my wife with whom she dares
To talk, and not be jealous.

King. How do you like
Amintor ?

Evad. As I did, Sir.

King. How is that ?

Evad. As one that, to fulfil your will and pleasure,
I have given leave to call me wife and love.

King. I see there is no lasting faith in sin ;
They, that break word with Heav'n, will break again
With all the world, and so dost thou with me.

Evad. How, Sir ?

King. This subtle woman's ignorance
Will not excuse you : thou hast taken oaths,
So great, methought, they did not well become
A woman's mouth, that thou wouldst ne'er enjoy
A man but me.

Evad. I never did swear so ; you do me wrong.

King. Day and night have heard it.

Evad.

Evad. I swore, indeed, that I would never love
A man of lower place; but, if your fortune
Should throw you from this height, I bad you trust
I would forsake you, and would bend to him
That won your throne: I love with my ambition,
Not with my eyes. But, if I ever yet
Touch'd any other, leprosy light here
Upon my face; which for your royalty
I would not stain!

King. Why, thou dissemblest, and it is in me
To punish thee.

Evad. Why, it is in me, then,
Not to love you, which will more afflict your body,
Than your punishment can mine.

King. But thou hast let Amintor lie with thee.

Evad. I have not.

King. Impudence! he says himself so.

Evad. He lyes.

King. He does not.

Evad. By this light he does, strangely and basely!
And I'll prove it so. I did not shun him
For a night; but told him, I would never close
With him.

King. Speak lower; 'tis false.

Evad. I am no man
To answer with a blow; or, if I were,
You are the king! But urge me not; it is most true.

King. Do not I know the uncontrouled thoughts
That youth brings with him, when his blood is high
With expectation, and desire of that
He long hath waited for? Is not his spirit,
Though he be temperate, of a valiant strain.
As this our age hath known? What could he do,
If such a sudden speech had met his blood,
But ruin thee for ever? If he had not kill'd thee,
He could not bear it thus—(he is as we)—
Or any other wrong'd man³³.

³³ *He could not bear it thus; he is as we,
Or any other wrong'd man.] Thus all the editions read; but*

48 THE MAID'S TRAGEDY.

Evad. It is dissembling.

King. Take him! farewell! henceforth I am thy foe;
And what disgraces I can blot thee, look for.

Evad. Stay, Sir!—Amintor!—You shall hear.—
Amintor!

Amin. What, my love?

Evad. Amintor, thou hast an ingenuous look,
And shouldst be virtuous: It amazeth me,
That thou canst make such base malicious lyes!

Amin. What, my dear wife!

Evad. Dear wife! I do despise thee.
Why, nothing can be baser than to sow
Dissention amongst lovers.

Amin. Lovers! who?

Evad. The king and me.

Amin. O, Heav'n!

Evad. Who should live long, and love without
distaste,

Were it not for such pickthanks as thyself!
Did you lie with me? Swear now, and be punish'd
In hell for this!

Amin. The faithless sin I made
To fair Aspatia, is not yet reveng'd;
It follows me. I will not lose a word
To this vile woman³⁴: But to you, my king,
The anguish of my soul thrusts out this truth,
You are a tyrant!

And not so much to wrong an honest man thus,
As to take a pride in talking with him of it.

Evad. Now, Sir, see how loud this fellow ly'd.

Amin. You that can know to wrong, should know
how men

Must right themselves: What punishment is due
From me to him that shall abuse my bed?
Is it not death? Nor can that satisfy,

as there is no making sense of the passage so, we have ventured at a
slight alteration, which, we think, restores the Authors' meaning.

³⁴ *To this wild woman.*] Thus all the editions read. We have
no doubt of *vile* being the original word.

Unless

THE MAID'S TRAGEDY. 49

Unless I send your Lives through all the land³⁵,
To shew how nobly I have freed myself.

King. Draw not thy sword; thou know'st I can not
fear

A subject's hand; but thou shalt feel the weight
Of this, if thou dost rage.

Amin. The weight of that!

If you have any worth, for Heav'n's sake, think
I fear not swords; for as you are mere man,
I dare as easily kill you for this deed,
As you dare think to do it. But there is³⁶
Divinity about you, that strikes dead
My rising passions: As you are my king,
I fall before you, and present my sword
To cut mine own flesh, if it be your will.
Alas! I'm nothing but a multitude
Of walking griefs! Yet, should I murder you,
I might before the world take the excuse
Of madness: For, compare my injuries,
And they will well appear too sad a weight
For reason to endure! But, fall I first
Amongst my sorrows, ere my treacherous hand

³⁵ *Unless I send your Lives through all the land.*] To send people's *Lives* through all the land is certainly a very odd and unprecedented expression. The poets, doubtless, must have wrote *limbs*, i. e. Unless I hew you to pieces, and send your quarters, (as is done by malefactors) through the kingdom, to let your subjects know my injuries, and the justice of my revenge: Your bare deaths cannot satisfy me. *Mr. Sympson.*

We must differ from Mr. Sympson, even in the first observation of his we meet with. To send their *Lives* 'through all the land, means, to send an account through the land of their vicious mode of life, and criminal connection.

³⁶ ——— but there is

Divinity about you, that strikes dead

My rising passions;] So Shakespeare said, before our Poets, in his Hamlet:

Let him go, Gertrude; do not fear our person:

There's such divinity doth hedge a king,

That treason can but peep to what it would;

And little of its will.

Mr. Theobald.

VOL I.

D

Touch

48 THE MAID'S TRAGEDY.

Evad. It is dissembling.

King. Take him! farewell! henceforth I am thy foe;
And what disgraces I can blot thee, look for.

Evad. Stay, Sir!—Amintor!—You shall hear.—
Amintor!

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And shouldst be virtuous: It amazeth me,
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Evad. Who should live long, and love without
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Were it not for such pickthanks as thyself!
Did you lie with me? Swear now, and be punish'd
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As to take a pride in talking with him of it.

Evad. Now, Sir, see how loud this fellow ly'd.

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To shew how nobly I have freed myself.

King. Draw not thy sword; thou know'st I cannot
fear

A subject's hand; but thou shalt feel the weight
Of this, if thou dost rage.

Amin. The weight of that!

If you have any worth, for Heav'n's sake, think
I fear not swords; for as you are mere man,
I dare as easily kill you for this deed,
As you dare think to do it. But there is ³⁶
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I fall before you, and present my sword
To cut mine own flesh, if it be your will.
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Of walking griefs! Yet, should I murder you,
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Of madness: For, compare my injuries,
And they will well appear too sad a weight
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³⁶ ——— but there is

Divinity about you, that strikes dead

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Let him go, Gertrude; do not fear our person:

There's such divinity doth hedge a king,

That treason can but peep to what it would;

And little of it's will.

Mr. Theobald,

VOL I.

D

Touch

50 THE MAID'S TRAGEDY.

Touch holy things ! But why (I know not what
I have to say) why did you chuse out me
To make thus wretched ? There were thousand fools
Easy to work on, and of state enough,
Within the island.

Evad. I would not have a fool ;
It were no credit for me.

Amin. Worse and worse !
Thou, that dar'st talk unto thy husband thus,
Profess thyself a whore, and, more than so,
Resolve to be so still——It is my fate
To bear and bow beneath a thousand griefs,
To keep that little credit with the world !
But there were wise ones too ; you might have ta'en
Another.

King. No ; for I believe thee honest,
As thou wert valiant.

Amin. All the happiness
Bestow'd upon me, turns into disgrace.
Gods, take your honesty again, for I
Am loaden with it ! Good my lord the king,
Be private in it.

King. Thou may'st live, Amintor,
Free as thy king, if thou wilt wink at this,
And be a means that we may meet in secret.

Amin. A bawd ! Hold, hold, my breast ! A bitter
curse

Seize me, if I forget not all respects
That are religious, on another word
Sounded like that ; and, through a sea of sins,
Will wade to my revenge, though I should call
Pains here, and, after life, upon my soul !

King. Well, I am resolute you lie not with her ;
And so I leave you. [Exit King.]

Evad. You must needs be prating ;
And see what follows.

Amin. Prithee, vex me not !
Leave me : I am afraid some sudden start
Will pull a murder on me.

Evad.

THE MAID'S TRAGEDY. 51

Evad. I am gone ;
I love my life well. [Exit *Evadne.*

Amin. I hate mine as much.
This 'tis to break a troth ! I should be glad,
If all this tide of grief would make me mad. [Exit.

Enter Melantius.

Mel. I'll know the cause of all Amintor's griefs,
Or friendship shall be idle.

Enter Calianax.

Cal. O Melantius, my daughter will die,

Mel. Trust me, I am sorry.

'Would thou hadst ta'en her room !

Cal. Thou art a slave,
A cut-throat slave, a bloody treacherous slave !

Mel. Take heed, old man ; thou wilt be heard to rave,
And lose thine offices.

Cal. I am valiant grown,
At all these years, and thou art but a slave !

Mel. Leave ! Some company will come, and I respect
Thy years, not thee, so much, that I could wish
To laugh at thee alone.

Cal. I'll spoil your mirth : I mean to fight with thee.
There lie, my cloak ! This was my father's sword,
And he durst fight. Are you prepar'd ?

Mel. Why wilt thou doat thyself out of thy life ?
Hence, get thee to-bed ! have careful looking-to,
And eat warm things, and trouble not me :
My head is full of thoughts, more weighty
Than thy life or death can be.

Cal. You have a name in war, where you stand safe
Amongst a multitude ; but I will try
What you dare do unto a weak old man,
In single fight. You will give ground, I fear.
Come, draw.

Mel. I will not draw, unless thou pull'st thy death
Upon thee with a stroke. There's no one blow,

52 THE MAID'S TRAGEDY.

That thou canst give, hath strength enough to kill me.
Tempt me not so far then : The pow'r of earth
Shall not redeem thee.

Cal. I must let him alone ;
He's stout and able ; and, to say the truth,
However I may set a face, and talk,
I am not valiant. When I was a youth,
I kept my credit with a testy trick I had,
Amongst cowards, but durst never fight.

Mel. I will not promise to preserve your life,
If you do stay.

Cal. I would give half my land
That I durst fight with that proud man a little.
If I had men to hold him, I would beat him
Till he ask'd me mercy.

Mel. Sir, will you be gone ?

Cal. I dare not stay ; but I'll go home, and beat
My servants all over for this. [*Exit Calianax.*]

Mel. This old fellow haunts me !
But the distracted carriage of my Amintor
Takes deeply on me : I will find the cause.
I fear his conscience cries, he wrong'd Aspatia.

Enter Amintor.

Amin. Mens' eyes are not so subtle to perceive
My inward misery : I bear my grief
Hid from the world. How art thou wretched then ?
For aught I know, all husbands are like me ;
And every one I talk with of his wife,
Is but a well dissembler of his woes,
As I am. 'Would I knew it ; for the rareness
Afflicts me now.

Mel. Amintor, we have not enjoy'd our friendship
of late, for we were wont to change our souls in talk³⁷.

Amin.

³⁷ For we were wont to charge our souls in talk.] This is flat nonsense, by the mistake of a single letter. The slight alteration I have made, [inserting *change* for *charge*] gives us the true meaning. So, in *A King and no King*,

THE MAID'S TRAGEDY. 53

Amin. Melantius, I can tell thee a good jest of Strato and a lady the last day.

Mel. How was't?

Amin. Why, such an odd one!

Mel. I have long'd to speak with you; not of an idle jest, that's forc'd, but of matter you are bound to utter to me.

Amin. What is that, my friend?

Mel. I have observ'd your words
Fall from your tongue wildly; and all your carriage
Like one that strove to shew his merry mood,
When he were ill dispos'd: You were not wont
To put such scorn into your speech, or wear
Upon your face ridiculous jollity.
Some sadness fits here, which your cunning would
Cover o'er with smiles, and 'twill not be.
What is it?

Amin. A sadness here! what cause
Can fate provide for me, to make me so?
Am I not lov'd through all this isle? The king
Rains greatness on me. Have I not receiv'd
A lady to my bed, that in her eye
Keeps mounting fire, and on her tender cheeks³⁸
Immutable

— or for honesty to interchange my bosom with, &c.

And, again,

And then how dare you offer to change words with her?

Mr. Seward and Mr. Symphon, concurred with me in starting this emendation.

Mr. Theobald.

³⁸ ——— and on her tender cheeks

Inevitable Colour,] This epithet, I know, signifies, not to be avoided, not to be eschewed; but I don't remember that it takes in the idea of *not to be resisted*; which is the sense required here. The old quarto of 1619 has it, *Immutable* colour,—But metre and emphasis prove that to be a corrupted reading; out of which, I dare be confident, I have extracted the genuine lection: *Inimitable* colour; *i. e.* a complexion not to be paragon'd by nature, nor imitated by art. We may easily account for the depravation at press. The hand-writing in those times was almost universally what we call secretary: And their i's were wrote without rittles over them. Let us then see how minute is the difference betwixt

54 THE MAID'S TRAGEDY.

Immutable colour, in her heart
 A prison for all virtue? Are not you,
 Which is above all joys, my constant friend?
 What sadness can I have? No; I am light,
 And feel the courses of my blood more warm
 And stirring than they were. Faith, marry too;
 And you will feel so unexpress'd a joy
 In chaste embraces, that you will indeed
 Appear another.

Mel. You may shape, Amintor,
 Causes to cozen the whole world withal,
 And yourself too; but 'tis not like a friend,
 To hide your soul from me. 'Tis not your nature
 To be thus idle: I have seen you stand
 As you were blasted, 'midst of all your mirth;
 Call thrice aloud, and then start, feigning joy
 So coldly!—World, what do I here? a friend
 Is nothing. Heav'n, I would have told that man
 My secret sins! I'll search an unknown land,
 And there plant friendship; all is wither'd here.
 Come with a compliment! I would have fought,
 Or told my friend 'he ly'd,' ere sooth'd him so.
 Out of my bosom!

Amin. But there is nothing——

Mel. Worse and worse! farewell!
 From this time have acquaintance, but no friend.

Amin. Melantius, stay: You shall know what it is.

Mel. See³⁹, how you play'd with friendship! Be
 advis'd

How

the two words, and how liable they might be to be mistaken one for the other:

Inimitable,
 Immutable.

Mr. Theobald.

We have inserted Mr. Theobald's note, because we think his conjecture ingenious; but have not ventured to disturb the text.

³⁹ *Mel. See, how you play'd with friendship.]* The quarrelling scene, which is now coming on, has been the subject of much criticism and controversy. Some have cry'd it up above that celebrated quarrel in Euripides's *Iphigenia at Aulis*, betwixt Agamemnon and

THE MAID'S TRAGEDY.

55

How you give cause unto yourself to say,
You have lost a friend.

Amin. Forgive what I have done;
For I am so o'ergone with injuries
Unheard-of, that I lose consideration
Of what I ought to do. Oh, oh!

Mel. Do not weep.
What is it? May I once but know the man
Hath turn'd my friend thus!

Amin. I had spoke at first,
But that——

Mel. But what?

Amin. I held it most unfit
For you to know. Faith, do not know it yet.

Mel. Thou see'st my love, that will keep company
With thee in tears; hide nothing then from me;
For when I know the cause of thy distemper,
With mine old armour I'll adorn myself,
My resolution, and cut through thy foes,
Unto thy quiet; till I place thy heart
As peaceable as spotless innocence.
What is it?

Amin. Why, 'tis this——It is too big
To get out——Let my tears make way awhile.

Mel. Punish me strangely, Heav'n, if he escape
Of life or fame, that brought this youth to this!

Amin. Your sister——

Mel. Well said.

Amin. You will wish't unknown,
When you have heard it.

Mel. No.

Amin. Is much to blame,
And to the king has given her honour up,
And lives in whoredom with him.

and his brother Menelaus: And others have decry'd it, as egregiously faulty in the motives, and progress; the working up, and declination of the passions. For my own part, I will venture to be no farther an umpire in the case, than in pronouncing that I have always seen it received with vehement applause; and that I think it very affecting on each side.

Mr. Theobald

56 THE MAID'S TRAGEDY.

Mel. How is this ?

Thou art run mad with injury, indeed ;
Thou couldst not utter this else. Speak again ;
For I forgive it freely ; tell thy griefs.

Amin. She's wanton : I am loth to say, ' a whore,'
Though it be true.

Mel. Speak yet again, before mine anger grow
Up, beyond throwing down : What are thy griefs ?

Amin. By all our friendship, these.

Mel. What, am I tame ?

After mine actions, shall the name of Friend
Blot all our family, and stick the brand
Of whore upon my sister, unreveng'd ?
My shaking flesh, be thou a witness for me,
With what unwillingness I go to scourge
This railer, whom my folly hath call'd Friend !
I will not take thee basely ; thy sword
Hangs near thy hand ; draw it, that I may whip
Thy rashness to repentance. Draw thy sword !

Amin. Not on thee, did thine anger swell as high
As the wild furies. Thou shouldst do me ease
Here, and eternally, if thy noble hand
Would cut me from my sorrows.

Mel. This is base

And fearful. They that use to utter lies
Provide not blows, but words, to qualify
The men they wrong'd. Thou hast a guilty cause.

Amin. Thou pleasest me ; for so much more like this
Will raise my anger up above my griefs,
(Which is a passion easier to be borne)
And I shall then be happy.

Mel. Take then more

To raise thine anger : 'Tis mere cowardice
Makes thee not draw ; and I will leave thee dead,
However. But if thou art so much press'd
With guilt and fear, as not to dare to fight,
I'll make thy memory loath'd, and fix a scandal
Upon thy name for ever.

Amin. Then I draw,

As

As justly as our magistrates their swords
To cut offenders off. I knew before,
'Twould grate your ears; but it was base in you
To urge a weighty secret from your friend,
And then rage at it. I shall be at ease,
If I be kill'd; and if you fall by me,
I shall not long out-live you.

Mel. Stay awhile.

The name of Friend is more than family,
Or all the world besides: I was a fool!
Thou searching human nature, that didst wake
To do me wrong, thou art inquisitive,
And thrust'st me upon questions that will take
My sleep away! 'Would I had dy'd, ere known
This sad dishonour! Pardon me, my friend!
If thou wilt strike, here is a faithful heart;
Pierce it, for I will never heave my hand
To thine. Behold the power thou hast in me!
I do believe my sister is a whore,
A leprous one! Put up thy sword, young man.

Amin. How should I bear it then, she being so?
I fear, my friend, that you will lose me shortly;
And I shall do a foul act on myself,
Through these disgraces.

Mel. Better half the land
Were buried quick together. No, Amintor;
Thou shalt have ease. Oh, this adult'rous king,
That drew her to it! Where got he the spirit
To wrong me so?

Amin. What is it then to me,
If it be wrong to you?

Mel. Why, not so much:
The credit of our house is thrown away.
But from his iron den I'll waken Death,
And hurl him on this king! My honesty
Shall steel my sword; and on its horrid point
I'll wear my cause, that shall amaze the eyes
Of this proud man, and be too glittering
For him to look on.

Amin.

58 THE MAID's TRAGEDY.

Amin. I have quite undone my fame,

Mel. Dry up thy watry eyes,
And cast a manly look upon my face;
For nothing is so wild as I, thy friend,
'Till I have freed thee. Still this swelling breast!
I go thus from thee, and will never cease
My vengeance, till I find thy heart at peace.

Amin. It must not be so. Stay! Mine eyes would tell
How loth I am to this; but, love and tears,
Leave me awhile; for I have hazarded
All that this world calls happy. Thou hast wrought
A secret from me, under name of Friend,
Which art could ne'er have found, nor torture wrung
From out my bosom: Give it me again;
For I will find it, wherefoe'er it lies,
Hid in the mortal'st part! Invent a way
To give it back.

Mel. Why would you have it back?
I will to death pursue him with revenge.

Amin. Therefore I call it back from thee; for I know
Thy blood so high, that thou wilt stir in this,
And shame me to posterity. Take to thy weapon!

Mel. Hear thy friend, that bears more years than
thou.

Amin. I will not hear! but draw, or I——

Mel. Amintor!

Amin. Draw then; for I am full as resolute
As fame and honour can inforce me be!
I cannot linger. Draw!

Mel. I do. But is not
My share of credit equal with thine,
If I do stir?

Amin. No; for it will be call'd
Honour in thee to spill thy sister's blood,
If she her birth abuse; and, on the king,
A brave revenge: But on me, that have walk'd
With patience in it, it will fix the name
Of fearful cuckold. Oh, that word! Be quick.

Mel. Then join with me.

Amin.

Amin. I dare not do a sin, or else I would.
Be speedy.

Mel. Then dare not fight with me; for that's a sin.
His grief distracts him: Call thy thoughts again,
And to thyself pronounce the name of Friend,
And see what that will work. I will not fight.

Amin. You must.

Mel. I will be kill'd first. Though my passions
Offer'd the like to you, 'tis not this earth
Shall buy my reason to it. Think awhile,
For you are (I must weep, when I speak that)
Almost besides yourself.

Amin. Oh, my soft temper!
So many sweet words from thy sister's mouth,
I am afraid, would make me take her
To embrace, and pardon her. I am mad, indeed,
And know not what I do. Yet, have a care
Of me in what thou dost.

Mel. Why, thinks my friend
I will forget his honour? or, to save
The brav'ry of our house, will lose his fame,
And fear to touch the throne of majesty?

Amin. A curse will follow that; but rather live
And suffer with me.

Mel. I'll do what worth shall bid me, and no more.

Amin. 'Faith, I am sick, and desp'rately, I hope;
Yet, leaning thus, I feel a kind of ease.

Mel. Come, take again your mirth about you.

Amin. I shall never do't.

Mel. I warrant you; look up; we'll walk together;
Put thine arm here; all shall be well again.

Amin. Thy love (oh, wretched!) ay, thy love,
Melantius!

Why, I have nothing else.

Mel. Be merry then.

[*Exeunt.*

Enter Melantius again.

Mel. This worthy young man may do violence
Upon himself; but I have cherish'd him

To

60 THE MAID'S TRAGEDY.

To my best pow'r, and sent him smiling from me,
To counterfeit again. Sword, hold thine edge;
My heart will never fail me. Diphilus!
Thou com'st as sent ⁴⁰.

Enter Diphilus.

Diph. Yonder has been such laughing.

Mel. Betwixt whom?

Diph. Why, our sister and the king; I thought
their spleens would break; they laugh'd us all out of
the room.

Mel. They must weep, Diphilus.

Diph. Must they?

Mel. They must.

Thou art my brother; and if I did believe
Thou hadst a base thought, I would rip it out,
Lie where it durst.

Diph. You should not; I would first mangle myself,
and find it.

Mel. That was spoke according to our strain.
Come, join thy hands to mine,
And swear a firmness to what project I
Shall lay before thee.

Diph. You do wrong us both:
People hereafter shall not say, there pass'd
A bond, more than our loves, to tie our lives
And deaths together.

Mel. It is as nobly said as I would wish.
Anon I'll tell you wonders: We are wrong'd.

Diph. But I will tell you now, we'll right our-
selves.

Mel. Stay not: Prepare the armour in my house;
And what friends you can draw unto our side,

⁴⁰ *Thou com'st as sent.*] This is, as *Horace* says of himself,
Brevi esse laboro, obscurus fio. The meaning is, thou com'st as
critically, as if I had sent for thee. *Mr. Theobald.*

Melantius means, you come at such a juncture, it seems as if
Heaven had sent you to aid my scheme of vengeance.

THE MAID'S TRAGEDY. 61

Not knowing of the cause, make ready too.
Haste, Diphilus, the time requires it, haste!

[*Exit Diphilus.*]

I hope my cause is just; I know my blood
Tells me it is; and I will credit it.
To take revenge, and lose myself withal,
Were idle; and to 'scape impossible,
Without I had the fort, which (misery!)
Remaining in the hands of my old enemy
Calianax——But I must have it. See,

Enter Calianax.

Where he comes shaking by me. Good my lord,
Forget your spleen to me; I never wrong'd you,
But would have peace with ev'ry man.

Cal. 'Tis well;

If I durst fight, your tongue would lie at quiet.

Mel. You're touchy without all cause.

Cal. Do, mock me.

Mel. By mine honour I speak truth.

Cal. Honour? where is't?

Mel. See, what starts you make into your hatred,
to my love and freedom to you. I come with
resolution to obtain a fruit of you.

Cal. A fruit of me! 'Tis very like it should be
granted, Sir.

Mel. Nay, go not hence:

'Tis this; you have the keeping of the fort,
And I would wish you, by the love you ought
To bear unto me, to deliver it
Into my hands.

Cal. I am in hope thou'rt mad,
To talk to me thus.

Mel. But there is a reason
To move you to it: I would kill the king,
That wrong'd you and your daughter.

Cal. Out, traitor!

Mel. Nay, but stay; I cannot 'scape, the deed
once done

Without

62 THE MAID'S TRAGEDY.

Without I have this fort.

Cal. And should I help thee?

Now thy treacherous mind betrays itself.

Mel. Come, delay me not;

Give me a sudden answer, or already
Thy last is spoke! refuse not offer'd love,
When it comes clad in secrets.

Cal. If I say

I will not, he will kill me; I do see't
Writ in his looks; and should I say I will,
He'll run and tell the king. I do not shun
Your friendship, dear Melantius, but this cause
Is weighty; give me but an hour to think.

Mel. Take it. I know this goes unto the king;
But I am arm'd. *[Exit Melantius.]*

Cal. Methinks I feel myself

But twenty now again! this fighting fool
Wants policy: I shall revenge my girl,
And make her red again. I pray, my legs
Will last that pace that I will carry them:
I shall want breath, before I find the king.

A C T IV.

Enter Melantiüs, Evadne, and a lady.

Mel. S A V E you !

Evad. Save you, sweet brother !

Mel. In my blunt eye,
Methinks, you look, Evadne——

Evad. Come, you would make me blush.

Mel. I would, Evadne : I shall displease my ends else.

Evad. You shall, if you commend me⁴¹ ; I am
bashful.

Come, Sir, how do I look ?

Mel. I would not have your women hear me
Break into commendation of you ; 'tis not seemly.

Evad. Go, wait me in the gallery. Now speak.
[*Exeunt ladies.*]

Mel. I'll lock the door first.

Evad. Why ?

Mel. I will not have your gilded things, that dance
In visitation with their Milan skins,
Choke up my business.

Evad. You are strangely disposed, Sir.

Mel. Good madam, not to make you merry.

Evad. No ; if you praise me, it will make me sad.

Mel. Such a sad commendation I have for you.

Evad. Brother, the court hath made you witty,
And learn to riddle.

Mel. I praise the court for't : Has it learnt you
nothing ?

Evad. Me ?

⁴¹ *You shall, if you command me ;*] Thus all the editions : *i. e.*
If you bid me blush, I shall. Evadne is very obsequious in this
condescension : but this, I dare say, was not the Poets' intentions.
They meant she should say ; ' Nay, if you commend me, I am
' bashful, and shall blush at your praises : ' And this is confirmed
by what Melantiüs immediately subjoins to it. *Mr. Theobald.*

Mel.

64 THE MAID'S TRAGEDY.

Mel. Ay, Evadne; thou art young and handsome,
A lady of a sweet complection,
And such a flowing carriage, that it cannot
Chuse but inflame a kingdom.

Evad. Gentle brother!

Mel. 'Tis yet in thy repentance, foolish woman,
To make me gentle.

Evad. How is this?

Mel. 'Tis base;
And I could blush, at these years, thorough all
My honour'd scars, to come to such a parly.

Evad. I understand you not.

Mel. You dare not, fool!
They, that commit thy faults, fly the remembrance.

Evad. My faults, Sir! I would have you know,
I care not

If they were written here, here in my forehead.

Mel. Thy body is too little for the story ⁴²;
The lusts of which would fill another woman,
Though she had twins within her.

Evad. This is faucy:

Look you intrude no more! There lies your way.

Mel. Thou art my way, and I will tread upon thee,
'Till I find truth out.

⁴² *Thy body is too little for the story,*

The lusts of which would fill another woman,

Though she had twins within her.] This is mock-reasoning, and *primâ facie* shews its absurdity. Surely, if a woman has twins within her, she can want very little more to fill her up. I dare be confident, I have restored the Poets' genuine reading. The propriety of the reasoning is a conviction of the certainty of the emendation.

Mr. Theobald.

Mr. Theobald reads,

——— *would fill another woman,*

As though sh'ad twins within her;

from which it is evident, he has misunderstood our Authors: They do not mean an internal, but an external filling. Your whole body, says Melantius, is so far from being large enough to contain an account of your lusts, that, if it was wrote all over, there would still remain enough of the story to cover the body of another woman, even though she were swelled with twins. Either way, however, it must be allowed, the thought and expression are rather uncouth.

Evad.

THE MAID'S TRAGEDY 65

Evad. What truth is that you look for?

Mel. Thy long-lost honour. 'Would the gods had
set me

Rather to grapple with the plague, or stand
One of their loudest bolts! Come, tell me quickly,
Do it without enforcement, and take heed
You swell me not above my temper.

Evad. How, Sir! where got you this report?

Mel. Where there were people, in every place.

Evad. They and the seconds of it are base people:
Believe them not, they ly'd.

Mel. Do not play with mine anger, do not, wretch!
I come to know that desperate fool that drew thee
From thy fair life: Be wise, and lay him open.

Evad. Unhand me, and learn manners! Such another
Forgetfulness forfeits your life.

Mel. Quench me this mighty humour, and then
tell me

Whose whore you are; for you are one, I know it.
Let all mine honours perish, but I'll find him,
Though he lie lock'd up in thy blood! Be sudden;
There is no facing it, and be not flatter'd!
The burnt air, when the Dog reigns, is not fouler
Than thy contagious name, 'till thy repentance
(If the gods grant thee any) purge thy sickness.

Evad. Be gone! You are my brother; that's your
safety.

Mel. I'll be a wolf first! 'Tis, to be thy brother,
An infamy below the sin of coward.
I am as far from being part of thee,
As thou art from thy virtue: Seek a kindred
'Mongst sensual beasts, and make a goat thy brother;
A goat is cooler. Will you tell me yet?

Evad. If you stay here and rail thus, I shall tell you,
I'll have you whipp'd! Get you to your command,
And there preach to your centinels, and tell them
What a brave man you are: I shall laugh at you.

Mel. You're grown a glorious whore! Where be
your fighters?

66 THE MAID'S TRAGEDY.

What mortal fool durst raise thee to this daring,
And I alive? By my just sword, h' ad safer
Bestrid a billow when the angry North
Plows up the sea, or made Heav'n's fire his food!
Work me no higher. Will you discover yet?

Evad. The fellow's mad: Sleep, and speak sense.

Mel. Force my swoll'n heart no further: I would
save thee.

Your great maintainers are not here, they dare not:
'Would they were all, and arm'd! I would speak loud;
Here's one should thunder to'em! will you tell me?
Thou hast no hope to 'scape: He that dares most,
And damns away his soul to do thee service,
Will sooner fetch meat from a hungry lion,
Than come to rescue thee; thou'lt death about thee⁴³.
Who has undone thine honour, poison'd thy virtue,
And, of a lovely rose, left thee a canker?

Evad. Let me consider.

Mel. Do, whose child thou wert,
Whose honour thou hast murder'd, whose grave
open'd,
And so pull'd on the gods, that in their justice
They must restore him flesh again, and life,
And raise his dry bones to revenge this scandal.

Evad. The gods are not of my mind; they had
better

Let 'em lie sweet still in the earth; they'll stink here.

Mel. Do you raise mirth out of my easiness?
Forfake me, then, all weaknesses of nature,
That make men women! Speak, you whore, speak
truth!

Or, by the dear soul of thy sleeping father,
This sword shall be thy lover! Tell, or I'll kill thee;
And, when thou hast told all, thou wilt deserve it.

⁴³ *Thou'lt death about thee:*

[Has *undone thine honour.*] The latter editions read, '*he* has
'undone;' that it should be *who*, and that Melantius is still question-
ing Evadne about the destroyer of her innocence, is not, we think, to
be doubted.

Evad.

THE MAID'S TRAGEDY. 67

Evad. You will not murder me ?

Mel. No ; 'tis a justice, and a noble one,
To put the light out of such base offenders.

Evad. Help !

Mel. By thy foul self, no human help shall help
thee,

If thou criest ! When I have kill'd thee, as I have
Vow'd to do if thou confests not, naked,
As thou hast left thine honour, will I leave thee ;
That on thy branded flesh the world may read
Thy black shame, and my justice. Wilt thou bend
yet ?

Evad. Yes.

Mel. Up, and begin your story.

Evad. Oh, I am miserable !

Mel. 'Tis true, thou art. Speak truth still.

Evad. I have offended :

Noble Sir, forgive me.

Mel. With what secure slave ?

Evad. Do not ask me, Sir :

Mine own remembrance is a misery
Too mighty for me.

Mel. Do not fall back again :

My sword's unsheathed yet.

Evad. What shall I do ?

Mel. Be true, and make your fault less.

Evad. I dare not tell.

Mel. Tell, or I'll be this day a-killing thee.

Evad. Will you forgive me then ?

Mel. Stay ; I must ask

Mine honour first. — I've too much foolish nature
In me : Speak.

Evad. Is there none else here ?

Mel. None but a fearful conscience ; that's too many.
Who is't ?

Evad. Oh, hear me gently. It was the king.

Mel. No more. My worthy father's and my services
Are lib'rally rewarded. King, I thank thee !

68 THE MAID'S TRAGEDY.

For all my dangers and my wounds, thou hast paid me
In my own metal : These are soldiers' thanks !
How long have you liv'd thus, Evadne ?

Evad. Too long.

Mel. Too late you find it. Can you be sorry ?

Evad. 'Would I were half as blameless.

Mel. Evadne, thou wilt to thy trade again !

Evad. First to my grave.

Mel. 'Would gods th' hadst been so blest.

Dost thou not hate this king now ? prithee hate him.
Couldst thou not curse him ? I command thee,
curse him.

Curse till the gods hear, and deliver him
To thy just wishes ! Yet, I fear, Evadne,
You had rather play your game out.

Evad. No ; I feel

Too many sad confusions here, to let in
Any loose flame hereafter.

Mel. Dost thou not feel, 'mong all those, one
brave anger

That breaks out nobly, and directs thine arm
To kill this base king ?

Evad. All the gods forbid it !

Mel. No ; all the gods require it, they are dis-
honour'd in him.

Evad. 'Tis too fearful.

Mel. You're valiant in his bed, and bold enough
To be a stale whore, and have your madam's name
Discourse for grooms and pages ; and, hereafter,
When his cool majesty hath laid you by,
To be at pension with some needy Sir,
For meat and coarser cloaths : Thus far you know
no fear.

Come, you shall kill him.

Evad. Good Sir !

Mel. An 'twere to kiss him dead, thou'dst smother
him.

Be wise, and kill him. Canst thou live, and know
What

THE MAID'S TRAGEDY. 69

What noble minds shall make thee, see thyself
Found out with ev'ry finger, made the shame
Of all successions, and in this great ruin
Thy brother and thy noble husband broken?
Thou shalt not live thus. Kneel, and swear to help me,
When I shall call thee to it; or, by all
Holy in Heav'n and earth, thou shalt not live
To breathe a full hour longer; not a thought!
Come, 'tis a righteous oath. Give me thy hands⁴⁴,
And, both to Heav'n held up, swear, by that wealth
This lustful thief stole from thee, when I say it,
To let his foul soul out.

Evad. Here I swear it;
And, all you spirits of abused ladies,
Help me in this performance!

Mel. Enough. This must be known to none
But you and I, Evadne; not to your lord,
Though he be wise and noble, and a fellow
Dares step as far into a worthy action
As the most daring; ay, as far as justice.
Ask me not why. Farewel. *[Exit Mel.]*

Evad. 'Would I could say so to my black disgrace!
Oh, where have I been all this time? how 'friended,
That I should lose myself thus desp'rately,
And none for pity shew me how I wand'red?
There is not in the compass of the light
A more unhappy creature: Sure, I am monstrous!
For I have done those follies, those mad mischiefs,
Would dare a woman⁴⁵. Oh, my laden soul,
Be not so cruel to me; choke not up

Enter Amintor.

The way to my repentance! Oh, my lord!

⁴⁴ *Give me thy hand.*] Thus say all the editions; but the sense of the following lines requires us to read *hands*, in the plural—'both to Heaven held up.'

⁴⁵ *Would dare a woman.*] i. e. would scare, would fright her out of her wits to commit.

Mr. Theobald.

Amin.

70 THE MAID'S TRAGEDY.

Amin. How now?

Evad. My much-abused lord ! [*Kneels.*

Amin. This cannot be !

Evad. I do not kneel to live ; I dare not hope it ;
The wrongs I did are greater. Look upon me,
Though I appear with all my faults.

Amin. Stand up.

This is a new way to beget more sorrow ⁴⁶ :
Heav'n knows I have too many ! Do not mock me :
Though I am tame, and bred up with my wrongs,
Which are my foster-brothers, I may leap,
Like a hand-wolf, into my natural wildness,
And do an outrage. Prithee, do not mock me.

Evad. My whole life is so leprous, it infects
All my repentance. I would buy your pardon,
Though at the highest set ; even with my life.
That slight contrition, that's no sacrifice
For what I have committed.

Amin. Sure I dazzle :

There cannot be a faith in that foul woman
That knows no god more mighty than her mischiefs.
Thou dost still worse, still number on thy faults,
To press my poor heart thus. Can I believe
There's any seed of virtue in that woman
Left to shoot up, that dares go on in sin,
Known, and so known as thine is ? Oh, Evadne !
'Would there were any safety in thy sex ⁴⁷,
That I might put a thousand sorrows off,
And credit thy repentance ! But I must not :
Thou hast brought me to that dull calamity,
To that strange misbelief of all the world,
And all things that are in it, that I fear

⁴⁶ *This is no new way, &c.]* This is the reading of the majority of the copies. It is undoubtedly sense ; but that which we have followed is more elegant.

⁴⁷ *Would there were any safety in thy sex,]* i. e. any security, any trust, or belief, to be reposed in them. *Mr. Theobald.*

I shall

I shall fall like a tree, and find my grave,
Only rememb'ring that I grieve.

Evad. My lord,
Give me your griefs: You are an innocent,
A soul as white as Heav'n; let not my sins
Perish your noble youth. I do not fall here
To shadow, by dissembling with my tears,
(As, all say, women can) or to make less,
What my hot will hath done, which Heav'n and you
Know to be tougher than the hand of time
Can cut from man's remembrance. No, I do not:
I do appear the same, the same Evadne,
Drest in the shames I liv'd in; the same monster!
But these are names of honour, to what I am:
I do present myself the foulest creature,
Most pois'nous, dang'rous, and despis'd of men,
Lerna e'er bred, or Nilus! I am hell,
'Till you, my dear lord, shoot your light into me,
The beams of your forgiveness. I am foul-sick,
And wither with the fear of one condemn'd,
'Till I have got your pardon.

Amin. Rise, Evadne.
Those heav'nly powers that put this good into thee,
Grant a continuance of it! I forgive thee:
Make thyself worthy of it; and take heed,
Take heed, Evadne, this be serious.
Mock not the pow'rs above, that can and dare
Give thee a great example of their justice
To all ensuing eyes, if thou playest
With thy repentance, the best sacrifice.

Evad. I have done nothing good to win belief,
My life hath been so faithless. All the creatures,
Made for Heav'n's honours, have their ends, and
good ones,
All but the cozz'ning crocodiles, false women!
They reign here like those plagues, those killing sores,
Men pray against; and when they die, like tales
Ill told and unbeliev'd, they pass away,

72 THE MAID'S TRAGEDY.

And go to dust forgotten ! But, my lord,
 Those short days I shall number to my rest
 (As many must not see me) shall, though too late,
 Though in my evening, yet perceive a will ;
 Since I can do no good, because a woman,
 Reach constantly at something that is near it :
 I will redeem one minute of my age,
 Or, like another Niobe, I'll weep
 'Till I am water.

Amin. I am now dissolv'd :
 My frozen soul melts. May each sin thou hast,
 Find a new mercy ! Rise ; I am at peace.
 Hadst thou been thus, thus excellently good,
 Before that devil king tempted thy frailty,
 Sure thou hadst made a star ! Give me thy hand.
 From this time I will know thee ; and, as far
 As honour gives me leave, be thy Amintor.
 When we meet next, I will salute thee fairly,
 And pray the gods to give thee happy days.
 My charity shall go along with thee,
 Though my embraces must be far from thee.
 I should have kill'd thee, but this sweet repentance
 Locks up my vengeance ; for which thus I kiss thee—
 The last kiss we must take ! And 'would to Heav'n
 The holy priest, that gave our hands together,
 Had giv'n us equal virtues ! Go, Evadne ;
 The gods thus part our bodies. Have a care
 My honour falls no farther : I am well then.

Evad. All the dear joys here, and, above, hereafter,
 Crown thy fair soul ! Thus I take leave, my lord ;
 And never shall you see the foul Evadne,
 'Till she have try'd all honour'd means, that may
 Set her in rest, and wash her stains away. [*Exeunt.*]

BANQUET. *Enter King and Calianax.*
Hautboys play within.

King. I cannot tell how I should credit this
 From you, that are his enemy.

Cal.

Cal. I'm fure
He said it to me; and I'll justify it
What way he dares oppose—but with my sword.

King. But did he break, without all circumstance,
To you, his foe, that he would have the fort,
To kill me, and then 'scape?

Cal. If he deny it,
I'll make him blush.

King. It sounds incredibly.

Cal. Ay, so does ev'ry thing I say of late.

King. Not so, Calianax.

Cal. Yes, I should fit
Mute, whilst a rogue with strong arms cuts your
throat.

King. Well, I will try him; and, if this be true,
I'll pawn my life I'll find it. If't be false,
And that you clothe your hate in such a lye,
You shall hereafter dote in your own house,
Not in the court.

Cal. Why, if it be a lye,
Mine ears are false; for, I'll be sworn, I heard it.
Old men are good for nothing: You were best
Put me to death for hearing, and free him
For meaning it. You would have trusted me
Once, but the time is alter'd.

King. And will still,
Where I may do with justice to the world:
You have no witnesses.

Cal. Yes, myself.

King. No more,
I mean, there were that heard it.

Cal. How! no more?
Would you have more? why, am not I enough
To hang a thousand rogues?

King. But, so, you may
Hang honest men too, if you please.

Cal. I may!
'Tis like I will do so: There are a hundred
Will swear it for a need too, if I say it——

King.

74 THE MAID'S TRAGEDY.

King. Such witnesses we need not.

Cal. And 'tis hard

If my word cannot hang a boist'rous knave.

King. Enough. Where's Strato?

Enter Strato.

Stra. Sir!

King. Why, where is all the company? Call
Amintor in;

Evadne. Where's my brother, and Melantius?

Bid him come too; and Diphilus. Call all [*Exit Strato.*

That are without there.—If he should desire

The combat of you, 'tis not in the pow'r

Of all our laws to hinder it, unless

We mean to quit 'em.

Cal. Why, if you do think

'Tis fit an old man, and a counsellor,

Do fight for what he says, then you may grant it.

*Enter Amintor, Evadne, Melantius, Diphilus, Lysippus,
Cleon, Strato.*

King. Come, Sirs! Amintor, thou art yet a
bridegroom,

And I will use thee so: Thou shalt sit down.

Evadne, sit; and you, Amintor, too:

This banquet is for you, Sir. Who has brought

A merry tale about him, to raise laughter

Amongst our wine? Why, Strato, where art thou?

Thou wilt chop out with them unseasonably,

When I desire them not.

Stra. 'Tis my ill luck, Sir, so to spend them then.

King. Reach me a bowl of wine. Melantius, thou
Art fad⁴³.

Mel.

⁴³ *King.* Reach me a bowl of wine: Melantius, thou art fad.

Amin. I should be, Sir, &c.] I have adjusted the metre, which was confused; and, by the assistance of the old quarto in 1619, affixed the reply to the right character. The king addressed himself to Melantius; and what impertinence it is in Amintor to take his friend's answer out of his mouth.

Mr. Theobald.

Mel. I should be, Sir, the merriest here,
But I have ne'er a story of my own
Worth telling at this time.

King. Give me the wine.
Melantius, I am now considering
How easy 'twere, for any man we trust,
To poison one of us in such a bowl.

Mel. I think it were not hard, Sir, for a knave.

Cal. Such as you are.

King. I'faith, 'twere easy : It becomes us well
To get plain-dealing men about ourselves ;
Such as you all are here. Amintor, to thee ;
And to thy fair Evadne.

Mel. Have you thought of this, Calianax? [*Apart.*

Cal. Yes, marry, have I.

Mel. And what's your resolution ?

Cal. You shall have it, foundly, I warrant you.

King. Reach to Amintor, Strato.

Amin. Here, my love,
This wine will do thee wrong, for it will set
Blushes upon thy cheeks ; and, 'till thou dost
A fault, 'twere pity.

King. Yet, I wonder much
At the strange desperation of these men,
That dare attempt such acts here in our state :
He could not 'scape, that did it.

Mel. Were he known,
Impossible.

King. It would be known, Melantius.

Mel. It ought to be : If he got then away,
He must wear all our lives upon his sword.
He need not fly the island ; he must leave
No one alive.

We have no doubt but the answer belongs to Melantius ; not only for the reason Mr. Theobald gives, which has some force, but because the king has just told Amintor, that ' the banquet was for him,' and asks, ' who has brought a merry tale about him ?' and then immediately addresses Melantius, telling him ' he is sad ;' to which it is natural for Melantius to reply.

King.

76 THE MAID'S TRAGEDY.

King. No; I should think no man
Could kill me, and 'scape clear, but that old man.

Cal. But I! heaven blefs me! I! should I, my liege?

King. I do not think thou would'st; but yet thou
might'st;

For thou haft in thy hands the means to 'scape,
By keeping of the fort. He has, Melantius,
And he has kept it well.

Mel. From cobwebs, Sir,
'Tis clean swept: I can find no other art
In keeping of it now: 'Twas ne'er besieg'd
Since he commanded it.

Cal. I shall be fure
Of your good word: But I have kept it safe
From such as you.

Mel. Keep your ill temper in:
I speak no malice. Had my brother kept it,
I should have said as much.

King. You are not merry.
Brother, drink wine. Sit you all still!—*Calianax*,
I cannot trust thus: I have thrown out words,
That would have fetch'd warm blood upon the cheeks
Of guilty men, and he is never mov'd:
He knows no such thing. [*Apart.*]

Cal. Impudence may 'scape,
When feeble virtue is accus'd.

King. He must,
If he were guilty, feel an alteration
At this our whisper, whilst we point at him:
You see he does not.

Cal. Let him hang himself:
What care I what he does? This he did say.

King. Melantius, you can easily conceive
What I have meant; for men that are in fault
Can subtly apprehend, when others aim
At what they do amiss: But I forgive
Freely, before this man. Heav'n do so too!
I will not touch thee, so much as with shame
Of telling it. Let it be so no more.

Cal.

THE MAID'S TRAGEDY. 77

Cal. Why, this is very fine.

Mel. I cannot tell

What 'tis you mean; but I am apt enough
Rudely to thrust into an ignorant fault.
But let me know it: Happily, 'tis nought
But misconstruction; and, where I am clear,
I will not take forgiveness of the gods,
Much less of you.

King. Nay, if you stand so stiff,
I shall call back my mercy.

Mel. I want smoothness
To thank a man for pardoning of a crime.
I never knew.

King. Not to instruct your knowledge, but to
shew you
My ears are every where, you meant to kill me,
And get the fort to 'scape.

Mel. Pardon me, Sir;
My bluntness will be pardoned: You preserve
A race of idle people here about you,
Facers and talkers⁴⁹, to defame the worth
Of those that do things worthy. The man that
utter'd this

Had perish'd without food, be't who it will,
But for this arm, that fenc'd him from the foe.
And if I thought you gave a faith to this,
The plainness of my nature would speak more.
Give me a pardon (for you ought to do't)
To kill him that spake this.

Cal. Ay, that will be
The end of all: Then I am fairly paid
For all my care and service.

Mel. That old man,
Who calls me enemy, and of whom I
(Though I will never match my hate so low)

⁴⁹ Eaters and talkers.] Most of the latter editions concur in this reading; which is evidently corrupt. *Facers*, and *facing*, are words used by our Authors to express *shameless people* and *effrontery*.

78 THE MAID'S TRAGEDY.

Have no good thought, would yet, I think, excuse me,
And swear he thought me wrong'd in this.

Cal. Who, I?

Thou shameless fellow! Didst thou not speak to me
Of it thyself.

Mel. Oh, then it came from him?

Cal. From me! who should it come from, but
from me?

Mel. Nay, I believe your malice is enough:
But I have lost my anger. Sir, I hope
You are well satisfied.

King. Lysippus, hear
Amintor and his lady; there's no sound
Comes from you; I will come and do't myself.

Amin. You have done already, Sir, for me, I
thank you.

King. Melantius, I do credit this from him,
How slight soe'er you make't.

Mel. 'Tis strange you should.

Cal. 'Tis strange he should believe an old man's
word,

That never ly'd in's life.

Mel. I talk not to thee!

Shall the wild words of this distemper'd man,
Frantic with age and sorrow, make a breach
Betwixt your majesty and me? 'Twas wrong
To hearken to him; but to credit him,
As much, at least, as I have pow'r to bear.
But pardon me—whilst I speak only truth,
I may commend myself—I have bestow'd
My careless blood with you, and should be loth
To think an action that would make me lose
That, and my thanks too. When I was a boy,
I thrust myself into my country's cause,
And did a deed that pluck'd five years from time,
And styl'd me man then. And for you, my king,
Your subjects all have fed by virtue of
My arm. This sword of mine hath plow'd the
ground,

And

THE MAID'S TRAGEDY. 79

And reapt the fruit in peace⁵⁰;
And you yourself have liv'd at home in ease.
So terrible I grew, that, without fwords,
My name hath fetch'd you conquest: And my heart
And limbs are still the same; my will as great
To do you service. Let me not be paid
With such a strange distrust.

King. Melantius,
I held it great injustice to believe
Thine enemy, and did not; if I did,
I do not; let that satisfy. What, struck
With sadness all? More wine!

Cal. A few fine words
Have overthrown my truth. Ah, th'art a villain!

Mel. Why, thou wert better let me have the fort,
Dotard! I will disgrace thee thus for ever:
There shall no credit lie upon thy words.
Think better, and deliver it. [*Apart.*]

Cal. My liege,
He's at me now again to do it. Speak;
Deny it, if thou canst. Examine him
While he is hot; for if he cool again,
He will forswear it.

King. This is lunacy,
I hope, Melantius.

Mel. He hath lost himself
Much, since his daughter miss'd the happiness
My sister gain'd; and, though he call me foe,
I pity him.

Cal. Pity? a pox upon you!

Mel. Mark his disorder'd words! And, at the
Masque,
Diagoras knows, he rag'd, and rail'd at me,
And call'd a lady whore, so innocent
She understood him not. But it becomes

⁵⁰ *And they have reapt the fruit of it in peace.*] Thus Mr. Seward prints this line. We think the alteration judicious; but do not chuse to depart so far from the old copies.

Both

80 THE MAID'S TRAGEDY.

Both you and me too to forgive distraction :
Pardon him, as I do.

Cal. I'll not speak for thee,
For all thy cunning. If you will be safe,
Chop off his head ; for there was never known
So impudent a rascal.

King. Some, that love him,
Get him to-bed. Why, pity should not let
Age make itself contemptible ; we must be
All old ; have him away.

Mel. Calianax,
The king believes you ; come, you shall go home,
And rest ; you have done well.—You'll give it up
When I have us'd you thus a month, I hope. [*Apart.*

Cal. Now, now, 'tis plain, Sir ; he does move me
still.

He says, he knows I'll give him up the fort,
When he has us'd me thus a month. I am mad,
Am I not, still ?

Omnes. Ha, ha, ha !

Cal. I shall be mad indeed, if you do thus !
Why should you trust a sturdy fellow there
(That has no virtue in him ; all's in his sword)
Before me ? Do but take his weapons from him,
And he's an ass ; and I'm a very fool,
Both with him, and without him, as you use me.

Omnes. Ha, ha, ha !

King. 'Tis well, Calianax. But if you use
This once again, I shall entreat some other
To see your offices be well discharg'd.
Be merry, gentlemen ; it grows somewhat late.
Amintor, thou wouldst be a-bed again.

Amin. Yes, Sir.

King. And you, Evadne. Let me take
Thee in my arms, Melantius, and believe
Thou art, as thou deserv'st to be, my friend
Still, and for ever. Good Calianax,
Sleep soundly ; it will bring thee to thyself. [*Exeunt.*

Manent.

Manent Melantius and Calianax.

Cal. Sleep soundly ! I sleep soundly now, I hope ;
I could not be thus else. How dar'st thou stay
Alone with me, knowing how thou hast us'd me ?

Mel. You cannot blast me with your tongue, and
that's
The strongest part you have about you.

Cal. Ay,
Do look for some great punishment for this :
For I begin to forget all my hate,
And take 't unkindly that mine enemy
Should use me so extr'ordinarily scurvily.

Mel. I shall melt too, if you begin to take
Unkindnesses : I never meant you hurt.

Cal. Thou'lt anger me again. Thou wretched rogue,
Meant me no hurt ! Disgrace me with the king ;
Lose all my offices ! This is no hurt,
Is it ? I prithee, what dost thou call hurt ?

Mel. To poison men, because they love me not ;
To call the credit of mens' wives in question ;
To murder children betwixt me and land ;
This is all hurt.

Cal. All this thou think'st, is sport ;
For mine is worse : But use thy will with me ;
For, betwixt grief and anger, I could cry.

Mel. Be wise then, and be safe ; thou may'st revenge.

Cal. Ay, o' the King ? I would revenge o' thee.

Mel. That you must plot yourself.

Cal. I'm a fine plotter.

Mel. The short is, I will hold thee with the king
In this perplexity, till peevishness
And thy disgrace have laid thee in thy grave.
But if thou wilt deliver up the fort,
I'll take thy trembling body in my arms,
And bear thee over dangers : Thou shalt hold
Thy wonted state.

Cal. If I should tell the king,
Canst thou deny 't again ?

82 THE MAID'S TRAGEDY.

Mel. Try, and believe.

Cal. Nay then, thou canst bring any thing about,
Thou shalt have the fort.

Mel. Why, well:

Here let our hate be buried; and this hand
Shall right us both. Give me thy aged breast
To compass.

Cal. Nay, I do not love thee yet;
I cannot well endure to look on thee:
And, if I thought it were a courtesy,
Thou should'st not have it. But I am disgrac'd;
My offices are to be ta'en away;
And, if I did but hold this fort a day,
I do believe, the King would take it from me,
And give it thee, things are so strangely carried.
Ne'er thank me for't; but yet the King shall know
There was some such thing in't I told him of;
And that I was an honest man.

Mel. He'll buy
That knowledge very dearly. *Diphilus,*

Enter Diphilus.

What news with thee?

Diph. This were a night indeed
To do it in: The King hath sent for her.

Mel. She shall perform it then. Go, *Diphilus,*
And take from this good man, my worthy friend,
The fort; he'll give it thee.

Diph. Have you got that?

Cal. Art thou of the same breed? Canst thou deny
This to the king too?

Diph. With a confidence
As great as his.

Cal. Faith, like enough.

Mel. Away, and use him kindly.

Cal. Touch not me;
I hate the whole strain. If thou follow me,
A great way off, I'll give thee up the fort;
And hang yourselves.

Mel. Be gone.

Diph.

THE MAID'S TRAGEDY. 83

Diph. He's finely wrought. [*Exeunt Cal. and Diph.*]

Mel. This is a night, 'spite of astronomers,
To do the deed in. I will wash the stain,
That rests upon our house, off with his blood.

Enter Amintor.

Amin. Melantius, now assist me: If thou be'st
That which thou say'st, assist me. I have lost
All my distempers, and have found a rage
So pleasing! Help me.

Mel. Who can see him thus,
And not swear vengeance? What's the matter, friend?

Amin. Out with thy sword; and, hand in hand
with me,
Rush to the chamber of this hated king;
And sink him, with the weight of all his sins,
To hell for ever.

Mel. 'Twere a rash attempt,
Not to be done with safety. Let your reason
Plot your revenge, and not your passion.

Amin. If thou refusest me in these extremes,
Thou art no friend: He sent for her to me;
By Heav'n, to me, myself! And, I must tell you,
I love her, as a stranger; there is worth
In that vile woman, worthy things, Melantius;
And she repents. I'll do't myself alone,
Though I be slain. Farewel.

Mel. He'll overthrow
My whole design with madness. Amintor,
Think what thou do'st: I dare as much as Valour;
But 'tis the king, the king, the king, Amintor,
With whom thou fightest!—I know he's honest,
And this will work with him. [*Aside.*]

Amin. I cannot tell
What thou hast said; but thou hast charm'd my sword
Out of my hand, and left me shaking here,
Defenceless.

Mel. I will take it up for thee.

Amin. What a wild beast is uncollected man!

84 THE MAID'S TRAGEDY.

The thing, that we call honour, bears us all
Headlong to sin, and yet itself is nothing.

Mel. Alas, how variable are thy thoughts!

Amin. Just like my fortunes: I was run to that
I purpos'd to have chid thee for. Some plot,
I did distrust, thou hadst against the king,
By that old fellow's carriage. But take heed;
There's not the least limb growing to a king,
But carries thunder in it.

Mel. I have none
Against him.

Amin. Why, come then; and still remember,
We may not think revenge.

Mel. I will remember. [*Exeunt.*]

A C T V.

Enter Evadne, and a gentleman.

Evad. **S**IR, is the king a-bed?

Gent. Madam, an hour ago.

Evad. Give me the key then, and let none be near;
'Tis the king's pleasure.

Gent. I understand you, madam; 'would 'twere mine.
I must not wish good rest unto your ladyship.

Evad. You talk, you talk.

Gent. 'Tis all I dare do, madam; but the king
Will wake, and then——

Evad. Saving your imagination, pray, good night;
Sir.

Gent. A good night be it then, and a long one,
madam. I am gone. [*Exit.*]

[*King a-bed.*]

Evad. The night grows horrible; and all about me
Like my black purpose. Oh, the conscience
Of a lost virgin! whither wilt thou pull me?
To what things, dismal as the depth of hell,

Wilt

Wilt thou provoke me? Let no woman dare
 From this hour be disloyal, if her heart be flesh,
 If she have blood, and can fear: 'Tis a daring
 Above that desperate fool's that left his peace,
 And went to sea to fight. 'Tis so many sins,
 An age cannot repent 'em⁵¹; and so great,
 The Gods want mercy for! Yet, I must through 'em.
 I have begun a slaughter on my honour,
 And I must end it there. He sleeps. Good Heav'ns!
 Why give you peace to this untemperate beast,
 That hath so long transgress'd you? I must kill him,
 And I will do it bravely: The mere joy
 Tells me, I merit in it. Yet I must not
 Thus tamely do it, as he sleeps; that were
 To rock him to another world: My vengeance
 Shall take him waking, and then lay before him
 The number of his wrongs and punishments.
 I'll shake his sins like furies, till I waken
 His evil angel, his sick conscience;
 And then I'll strike him dead. King by your leave:

[Ties his arms to the bed.]

I dare not trust your strength. Your Grace and I
 Must grapple upon even terms no more.
 So: If he rail me not from my resolution,
 I shall be strong enough. My lord the king!
 My lord! He sleeps, as if he meant to wake
 No more. My lord! Is he not dead already?
 Sir! My lord!

King. Who's that?

Evad. Oh, you sleep soundly, Sir!

King. My dear Evadne,
 I have been dreaming of thee. Come to-bed.

Evad. I am come at length, Sir; but how welcome?

King. What pretty new device is this, Evadne?
 What, do you tie me to you? By my love,
 This is a quaint one. Come, my dear, and kiss me;

⁵¹ ———— 'tis so many sins,

An age cannot prevent 'em ;] Mr. Theobald, we think judiciously, makes the alteration we have followed.

86 THE MAID'S TRAGEDY.

I'll be thy Mars⁵²; to-bed, my queen of love:
Let us be caught together, that the gods
May see, and envy our embraces.

Evad. Stay, Sir, stay;
You are too hot, and I have brought you physic
To temper your high veins.

King. Prithee, to-bed then; let me take it warm;
There thou shalt know the state of my body better.

Evad. I know you have a surfeited foul body;
And you must bleed.

King. Bleed!

Evad. Ay, you shall bleed! Lie still; and, if
the devil,
Your lust, will give you leave, repent. This steel
Comes to redeem the honour that you stole,
King, my fair name; which nothing but thy death
Can answer to the world.

King. How's this, Evadne?

Evad. I am not she; nor bear I in this breast
So much cold spirit to be call'd a woman.
I am a tyger; I am any thing
That knows not pity. Stir not! If thou dost,
I'll take thee unprepar'd; thy fears upon thee,
That make thy sins look double; and so send thee
(By my revenge, I will) to look those torments⁵³
Prepar'd for such black souls.

King. Thou dost not mean this; 'tis impossible:
Thou art too sweet and gentle.

Evad. No, I am not.

I am

⁵² *I'll be thy Mars;*] The allusion here is to the words of Ovid in the fourth book of his *Metamorphoses*, where Mars and Venus are caught in conjunction by a subtle net which her husband Vulcan had bound over them, and exposed them to the view of the Gods.

*Turpes jacuere ligati
Turpiter, atque aliquis de Diis non tristibus optat
Sic fieri turpis.* Mr. Theobald.

⁵³ ——— to look those torments.

Prepar'd for such black souls] Look occurs in the line immediately preceding; and the repetition of it is no manner of elegance.
Besides

I am as foul as thou art, and can number
 As many such hells here. I was once fair,
 Once I was lovely; not a blowing rose
 More chafely sweet, till thou, thou, thou foul canker,
 (Stir not) didst poison me. I was a world of virtue,
 Till your curst court and you (Hell bless you for't!)
 With your temptations on temptations,
 Made me give up mine honour; for which, King,
 I'm come to kill thee.

King. No!

Evad. I am.

King. Thou art not!

I prithee speak not these things: Thou art gentle,
 And wert not meant thus rugged.

Evad. Peace, and hear me.

Stir nothing but your tongue, and that for mercy
 To those above us; by whose lights I vow,
 Those blessed fires that shot to see our sin,
 If thy hot soul had substance with thy blood,
 I would kill that too; which, being past my steel⁵⁴,
 My tongue shall reach. Thou art a shameless villain!
 A thing out of the overcharge of nature;
 Sent, like a thick cloud, to disperse a plague
 Upon weak catching women! such a tyrant,
 That for his lust would sell away his subjects;
 Ay, all his Heav'n hereafter!

King. Hear, Evadne,
 Thou soul of sweetness, hear! I am thy King.

Besides, to *look* those torments, is no English expression: It must
 either be, *seek* or *brook*.

Mr. Theobald.

Look, from the days of our Authors down to our own, has frequently
 been used for *look FOR*, or *seek*. With respect to the elegance, it is
 our province to give our Authors' own words, not (supposing we could)
 to substitute better.

⁵⁴ ——— which, being past my steel,

My tongue shall teach.] 'Tis evident from common-sense,
 that I have retrieved the true reading here. A corruption, exactly
 the same, had possessed a passage in Shakespear's *Coriolanus*, till I
 corrected it. Mr. Seward likewise started this emendation here.

Mr. Theobald.

88 THE MAID'S TRAGEDY.

Evad. Thou art my shame ! Lie still, there's none
about you,

Within your cries : All promises of safety
Are but deluding dreams. Thus, thus, thou foul man,
Thus I begin my vengeance ! [Stabs him,

King. Hold, Evadne !
I do command thee hold.

Evad. I do not mean, Sir,
To part so fairly with you ; we must change
More of these love-tricks yet.

King. What bloody villain
Provok'd thee to this murder ?

Evad. Thou, thou monster.

King. Oh !

Evad. Thou kept'st me brave at court, and whor'd'st
me, King ;
Then married me to a young noble gentleman,
And whor'd'st me still.

King. Evadne, pity me.

Evad. Hell take me then ! This for my lord
Amintor !
This for my noble brother ! and this stroke
For the most wrong'd of women ! [Kills him,

King. Oh ! I die.

Evad. Die all our faults together ! I forgive thee.
[Exit.

Enter two of the bedchamber.

1. Come, now she's gone, let's enter ; the King
expects it, and will be angry.

2. 'Tis a fine wench ; we'll have a snap at her one
of these nights, as she goes from him.

1. Content. How quickly he had done with her !
I see, kings can do no more that way than other
mortal people.

2. How fast he is ! I cannot hear him breathe.

1. Either the tapers give a feeble light,
Or he looks very pale.

2. And so he does :

Pray

THE MAID'S TRAGEDY. 89

Pray Heaven he be well ; let's look. Alas !
He's stiff, wounded and dead : Treason, treason !

1. Run forth and call.

2. Treason, treason !

[Exit.

1. This will be laid on us :

Who can believe a woman could do this ?

Enter Cleon and Lysippus.

Cleon. How now ! Where's the traitor ?

1. Fled, fled away ; but there her woful act lies still,

Cleon. Her act ! a woman !

Lys. Where's the body ?

1. There.

Lys. Farewell, thou worthy man ! There were
two bonds

That tied our loves, a brother and a king ;
The least of which might fetch a flood of tears :
But such the misery of greatness is,
They have no time to mourn ; then pardon me !
Sirs, which way went she ?

Enter Strato.

Stra. Never follow her ;
For she, alas ! was but the instrument.
News is now brought in, that Melantius
Has got the fort, and stands upon the wall ;
And with a loud voice calls those few, that pass
At this dead time of night, delivering
The innocence of this act.

Lys. Gentlemen, I am your king.

Stra. We do acknowledge it.

Lys. I would I were not ! Follow, all ; for this
Must have a sudden stop. [Exeunt.

Enter Melantius, Diphilus, and Calianax, on the walls.

Mel. If the dull people can believe I am arm'd,
(Be constant, Diphilus !) now we have time,
Either to bring our banish'd honours home,
Or create new ones in our ends.

Diph.

90 THE MAID'S TRAGEDY.

Diph. I fear not ;
My spirit lies not that way. Courage, Calianax.

Cal. 'Would I had any ! you should quickly know it.

Mel. Speak to the people : Thou art eloquent.

Cal. 'Tis a fine eloquence to come to the gallows !
You were born to be my end. The devil take you !
Now must I hang for company. 'Tis strange,
I should be old, and neither wise nor valiant.

Enter Lyfippus, Diagoras, Cleon, Strato, and guard.

Lyf. See where he stands, as boldly confident
As if he had his full command about him.

Stra. He looks as if he had the better cause, Sir ;
Under your gracious pardon, let me speak it !
Though he be mighty-spirited, and forward
To all great things ; to all things of that danger
Worse men shake at the telling of ; yet, certainly,
I do believe him noble ; and this action
Rather pull'd on, than sought : His mind was ever
As worthy as his hand.

Lyf. 'Tis my fear, too.
Heaven forgive all ! Summon him, lord Cleon.

Cleon. Ho, from the walls there.

Mel. Worthy Cleon, welcome.
We could have wish'd you here, lord : You are honest.
Cal. Well, thou art as flattering a knave, though
I dare not tell thee so—— *[Aside.*

Lyf. Melantius !

Mel. Sir.

Lyf. I am sorry that we meet thus ; our old love
Never requir'd such distance. Pray Heaven,
You have not left yourself, and sought this safety
More out of fear than honour ! You have lost
A noble master ; which your faith, Melantius,
Some think, might have preserv'd : Yet you know best.

Cal. When time was, I was mad ; some, that dares
fight,
I hope will pay this rascal.

Mel.

THE MAID'S TRAGEDY. 91

Mel. Royal young man, whose tears look lovely
on thee;

Had they been shed for a deserving one,
They had been lasting monuments! Thy brother,
While he was good, I call'd him king; and serv'd him
With that strong faith, that most unwearied valour,
Pull'd people from the farthest sun to seek him,
And beg his friendship ⁵⁵. I was then his soldier.
But since his hot pride drew him to disgrace me,
And brand my noble actions with his lust
(That never-cur'd dishonour of my sister,
Base stain of whore! and, which is worse,
The joy to make it still so) like myself,
Thus I have flung him off with my allegiance;
And stand here mine own justice, to revenge
What I have suffer'd in him; and this old man,
Wronged almost to lunacy.

Cal. Who I?

You would draw me in. I have had no wrong,
I do disclaim ye all.

Mel. The short is this:

'Tis no ambition to lift up myself
Urgeth me thus; I do desire again
To be a subject, so I may be free.
If not, I know my strength, and will unbuild
This goodly town. Be speedy, and be wise,
In a reply.

Stra. Be sudden, Sir, to tie
All up again: What's done is past recall,
And past you to revenge; and there are thousands,
That wait for such a troubled hour as this.
Throw him the blank.

Lys. Melantius, write in that
Thy choice: My seal is at it.

Mel. It was our honours drew us to this act,
Not gain; and we will only work our pardons.

Cal. Put my name in too.

⁵⁵ *And beg his friendship.*] This is the reading of the edition of
1619: That of 1630 says, *buy*.

92 THE MAID'S TRAGEDY.

Diph. You disclaim'd us all
But now, Calianax.

Cal. That is all one ;
I'll not be hang'd hereafter by a trick :
I'll have it in.

Mel. You shall, you shall.
Come to the back gate, and we'll call you king,
And give you up the fort.

Lys. Away, away. [*Exeunt omnes.*]

Enter Aspatia in man's apparel.

Asp. This is my fatal hour. Heav'n may forgive
My rash attempt, that causelessly hath laid
Griefs on me that will never let me rest ;
And put a woman's heart into my breast.
It is more honour for you, that I die ;
For she, that can endure the misery
That I have on me, and be patient too,
May live and laugh at all that you can do.
God save you, Sir !

Enter Servant.

Ser. And you, Sir. What's your business ?

Asp. With you, Sir, now ; to do me the fair office
To help me to your lord.

Ser. What, would you serve him ?

Asp. I'll do him any service ; but, to haste,
For my affairs are earnest, I desire
To speak with him.

Ser. Sir, because you're in such haste, I would be
loth delay you any longer : You cannot.

Asp. It shall become you, though, to tell your lord.

Ser. Sir, he will speak with nobody ; but, in parti-
cular, I have in charge, about no weighty matters ⁵⁶.

Asp. This is most strange. Art thou gold-proof ?
There's for thee ; help me to him.

⁵⁶ *But in particular I have in charge, about no weighty matters.*]
These words, which shew an impertinence so common in all servants,
and a desire of sifting into every body's business, are only to be found
in the first quarto, in 1619.

Mr. Theobald.

Ser.

THE MAID'S TRAGEDY. 93

Ser. Pray be not angry, Sir. I'll do my best. [*Exit.*]

Asp. How stubbornly this fellow answer'd me!
There is a vile dishonest trick in man,
More than in women: All the men I meet
Appear thus to me, are all harsh and rude;
And have a subtilty in every thing,
Which love could never know. But we fond women
Harbour the easiest and the smoothest thoughts,
And think, all shall go so! It is unjust,
That men and women should be match'd together.

Enter Amintor and his man.

Amin. Where is he?

Ser. There, my lord.

Amin. What would you, Sir?

Asp. Please it your lordship to command your man
Out of the room, I shall deliver things
Worthy your hearing.

Amin. Leave us.

[*Exit servant.*]

Asp. Oh, that that shape
Should bury falsehood in it!

[*Aside.*]

Amin. Now your will, Sir.

Asp. When you know me, my lord, you needs
must guess
My business; and I am not hard to know;
For till the chance of war mark'd this smooth face
With these few blemishes, people would call me
My sister's picture, and her mine. In short,
I am the brother to the wrong'd Aspatia.

Amin. The wrong'd Aspatia! 'Would thou wert
so too

Unto the wrong'd Amintor! Let me kiss
That hand of thine, in honour that I bear
Unto the wrong'd Aspatia. Here I stand,
That did it: 'Would he could not! Gentle youth,
Leave me; for there is something in thy looks,
That calls my sins, in a most hideous form,
Into my mind; and I have grief enough
Without thy help.

Asp. I would I could with credit.

Since

94 THE MAID's TRAGEDY.

Since I was twelve years old, I had not seen
My sister till this hour; I now arriv'd:
She sent for me to see her marriage;
A woful one! But they, that are above,
Have ends in every thing ⁵⁷. She us'd few words;
But yet enough to make me understand
The baseness of the injuries you did her.
'That little training I have had, is war:
I may behave myself rudely in peace;
I would not, though. I shall not need to tell you,
I am but young, and would be loth to lose
Honour, that is not easily gain'd again.
Fairly I mean to deal: The age is strict
For single combats; and we shall be stopp'd,
If it be publish'd. If you like your sword,
Use it; if mine appear a better to you,
Change; for the ground is this, and this the time,
To end our difference.

Amin. Charitable youth,
(If thou be'st such) think not I will maintain
So strange a wrong: And, for thy sister's sake,
Know, that I could not think that desperate thing
I durst not do; yet, to enjoy this world,
I would not see her; for, beholding thee,
I am I know not what. If I have aught,
'That may content thee, take it, and be gone;
For death is not so terrible as thou.
Thine eyes shoot guilt into me.

Asp. Thus, she swore,
Thou wouldst behave thyself; and give me words
That would fetch tears into my eyes; and so
Thou dost, indeed. But yet she bad me watch,

⁵⁷ ——— *But they that are above,
Have ends in every thing.*] How nobly, and to what advantage,
has SHAKESPEARE express'd this sentiment, in his Hamlet!

————— *And that should teach us,
There's a divinity that shapes our ends,
Rough-hew them how we will.*

Mr. Theobald.

Left I were cozen'd ; and be sure to fight,
Ere I return'd.

Amin. That must not be with me.
For her I'll die directly ; but against her
Will never hazard it.

Asp. You must be urg'd.
I do not deal uncivilly with those
That dare to fight ; but such a one as you
Must be us'd thus. *[She strikes him.]*

Amin. I prithee, youth, take heed.
Thy sister is a thing to me so much
Above mine honour, that I can endure
All this. Good gods ! a blow I can endure !
But stay not, lest thou draw a timeless death
Upon thyself.

Asp. Thou art some prating fellow ;
One, that hath studied out a trick to talk,
And move soft-hearted people ; to be kick'd
[She kicks him.]

Thus, to be kick'd !—Why should he be so slow
In giving me my death ? *[Aside.]*

Amin. A man can bear
No more, and keep his flesh. Forgive me, then !
I would endure yet, if I could. Now shew
The spirit thou pretend'st, and understand,
Thou hast no hour to live.— *[They fight.]*
What dost thou mean ?

Thou canst not fight : The blows thou mak'st at me
Are quite besides ; and those I offer at thee,
Thou spread'st thine arms, and tak'st upon thy breast,
Alas, defenceless !

Asp. I have got enough,
And my desire. There is no place so fit
For me to die as here.

Enter Evadne, her hands bloody, with a knife.

Evad. Amintor, I am loaden with events,
That fly to make thee happy. I have joys,
That in a moment can call back thy wrongs,
And settle thee in thy free state again.

It

96 THE MAID'S TRAGEDY.

It is Evadne still that follows thee,
But not her mischiefs.

Amin. Thou canst not fool me to believe again;
But thou hast looks and things so full of news,
That I am stay'd.

Evad. Noble Amintor, put off thy amaze,
Let thine eyes loose, and speak: Am I not fair?
Looks not Evadne beauteous, with these rites now?
Were those hours half so lovely in thine eyes,
When our hands met before the holy man?
I was too foul within to look fair then:
Since I knew ill, I was not free till now.

Amin. There is presage of some important thing
About thee, which, it seems, thy tongue hath lost.
Thy hands are bloody, and thou hast a knife!

Evad. In this consists thy happiness and mine.
Joy to Amintor! for the king is dead.

Amin. Those have most pow'r to hurt us, that we
love;

We lay our sleeping lives within their arms!
Why, thou hast rais'd up Mischief to his height,
And found one, to out-name thy other faults.
Thou hast no intermission of thy sins,
But all thy life is a continued ill.
Black is thy colour now, disease thy nature.
Joy to Amintor! Thou hast touch'd a life,
The very name of which had pow'r to chain
Up all my rage, and calm my wildest wrongs.

Evad. 'Tis done; and since I could not find a way
To meet thy love so clear as through his life,
I cannot now repent it.

Amin. Couldst thou procure the gods to speak
to me,

To bid me love this woman, and forgive,
I think I should fall out with them. Behold,
Here lies a youth whose wounds bleed in my breast,
Sent by his violent fate, to fetch his death
From my slow hand: And, to augment my woe,
You now are present, stain'd with a king's blood,
Violently

THE MAID'S TRAGEDY. 97

Violently shed. This keeps night here,
And throws an unknown wilderiness about me ⁵⁸.

Asp. Oh, oh, oh!

Amin. No more; pursue me not.

Evad. Forgive me then, and take me to thy bed.
We may not part.

Amin. Forbear! Be wise, and let my rage
Go this way.

Evad. 'Tis you that I would stay, not it.

Amin. Take heed; it will return with me.

Evad. If it must be, I shall not fear to meet it:
Take me home.

Amin. Thou monster of cruelty, forbear!

Evad. For Heaven's sake, look more calm:
Thine eyes are sharper than thou canst make thy sword.

Amin. Away, away!

Thy knees are more to me than violence.
I'm worse than sick to see knees follow me,
For that I must not grant. For Heaven's sake, stand.

Evad. Receive me, then.

Amin. I dare not stay thy language:
In midst of all my anger and my grief,
Thou dost awake something that troubles me,
And says, 'I lov'd thee once.' I dare not stay;
There is no end of woman's reasoning. [*Leaves her.*]

Evad. Amintor, thou shalt love me now again:
Go; I am calm. Farewel, and peace for ever!
Evadne, whom thou hat'st, will die for thee.

[*Kills herself.*]

Amin. I have a little human nature yet,
That's left for thee, that bids me stay thy hand. [*Returns.*]

Evad. Thy hand was welcome, but it came too late.
Oh, I am lost! the heavy sleep makes haste. [*She dies.*]

⁵⁸ ————— *an unknown wilderiness.*] This is a word here appropriated by the Poets to signify *wildness*; from the verb *bewilder*.

Milton seems to have been pleased with the liberty of using it in this sense, as he has copied it in his *Paradise Lost*; B. ix. v. 245.

The paths and bowers doubt not but our joint hands

Will keep from wilderiness with ease.

Mr. Theobald.

96 THE MAID'S TRAGEDY.

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Let thine eyes loose, and speak: Am I not fair?
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The very name of which had pow'r to chain
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To meet thy love so clear as through his life,
I cannot now repent it.

Amin. Couldst thou procure the gods to speak
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To bid me love this woman, and forgive,
I think I should fall out with them. Behold,
Here lies a youth whose wounds bleed in my breast,
Sent by his violent fate, to fetch his death
From my slow hand: And, to augment my woe,
You now are present, stain'd with a king's blood,
Violently

THE MAID'S TRAGEDY. 97

Violently shed. This keeps night here,
And throws an unknown wilderneck about me ⁵⁸.

Asp. Oh, oh, oh!

Amin. No more; pursue me not.

Evad. Forgive me then, and take me to thy bed.
We may not part.

Amin. Forbear! Be wise, and let my rage
Go this way.

Evad. 'Tis you that I would stay, not it.

Amin. Take heed; it will return with me.

Evad. If it must be, I shall not fear to meet it:
Take me home.

Amin. Thou monster of cruelty, forbear!

Evad. For Heaven's sake, look more calm:
Thine eyes are sharper than thou canst make thy sword.

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I'm worse than sick to see knees follow me,
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And says, 'I lov'd thee once.' I dare not stay;
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Go; I am calm. Farewel, and peace for ever!
Evadne, whom thou hat'st, will die for thee.

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That's left for thee, that bids me stay thy hand. [*Returns.*]

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Will keep from wilderness with ease.

Mr. Theobald.

98 THE MAID'S TRAGEDY.

Asp. Oh, oh, oh!

Amin. This earth of mine doth tremble, and I feel
A stark affrighted motion in my blood :
My soul grows weary of her house, and I
All over am a trouble to myself.
There is some hidden pow'r in these dead things,
That calls my flesh unto 'em : I am cold !
Be resolute, and bear 'em company.
There's something, yet, which I am loth to leave.
There's man enough in me to meet the fears
That death can bring ; and yet, 'would it were done !
I can find nothing in the whole discourse
Of death, I durst not meet the boldest way ;
Yet still, betwixt the reason and the act,
The wrong I to Aspatia did stands up :
I have not such another fault to answer.
Though she may justly arm herself with scorn
And hate of me, my soul will part less troubled,
When I have paid to her in tears my sorrow.
I will not leave this act unsatisfied,
If all that's left in me, can answer it.

Asp. Was it a dream ? There stands Amintor still ;
Or I dream still.

Amin. How dost thou ? Speak ; receive my love
and help.

Thy blood climbs up to his old place again :
There's hope of thy recovery.

Asp. Did you not name Aspatia ?

Amin. I did.

Asp. And talk'd of tears and sorrow unto her ?

Amin. 'Tis true ; and 'till these happy signs in thee
Did stay my course, 'twas thither I was going.

Asp. Thou'rt there already, and these wounds are
hers :

Those threats, I brought with me, sought not revenge ;
But came to fetch this blessing from thy hand.

I am Aspatia yet.

Amin. Dare my soul ever look abroad again ?

Asp. I shall surely live, Amintor ; I am well :

A kind

THE MAID'S TRAGEDY. 99

A kind of healthful joy wanders within me.

Amin. The world wants lives to expiate thy loss⁵⁹:
Come, let me bear thee to some place of help.

Asp. Amintor, thou must stay; I must rest here;
My strength begins to disobey my will.
How dost thou, my best soul? I would fain live
Now, if I could: Wouldst thou have lov'd me, then?

Amin. Alas!

All that I am's not worth a hair from thee.

Asp. Give me thy hand; my hands grope up and
down,

And cannot find thee: I am wondrous sick:
Have I thy hand, Amintor?

Amin. Thou greatest blessing of the world, thou hast.

Asp. I do believe thee better than my sense.

Oh! I must go. Farewell! [*Dies.*]

Amin. She swoons! Aspatia! Help! For Heav'n's
fake, water!

Such as may chain life ever to this frame.

Aspatia, speak! What, no help yet? I fool!

I'll chafe her temples: Yet there's nothing stirs:

Some hidden pow'r tell her, Amintor calls,

And let her answer me! Aspatia, speak!

⁵⁹ *The world wants* lines to excuse thy loss:] The sense and verse are both spoil'd; I hope, I have restored both. My emendation gives this meaning. All the *lives* of all the women in the world cannot to me atone for the loss of thine. I guess that some transcriber, or editor, had first by mere accident changed *lives* to *lines*; and the word, *expiate*, not making the least sense with that, occasioned some future editor, without regard to the metre, to substitute *excuse* instead of it; which does carry some shadow of sense, though but an empty one. — This is the emendation and comment of the ingenious Mr. Seward. — Long before I received his thoughts upon this passage, I had substituted with less variation from the text:

The world wants limits to excuse thy loss.

i. e. Were the world ever so wide and large, the loss of thee is so great, that its whole *vastity*, as Shakespeare says, would not be sufficient to *excuse*, or *compensate* for it. I have adopted my friend's conjecture into the text, because I would be always willing to shew a diffidence of my own poor efforts. The readers will have the benefit of both our conjectures.

Mr. Theobald.

100 THE MAID'S TRAGEDY.

I've heard, if there be any life, but bow
 The body thus, and it will shew itself.
 Oh, she is gone! I will not leave her yet.
 Since out of justice we must challenge nothing,
 I'll call it mercy if you'll pity me,
 Ye heav'nly powers! and lend, for some few years,
 The blessed soul to this fair seat again.
 No comfort comes; the gods deny me too!
 I'll bow the body once again. Aspatia!
 The soul is fled for ever; and I wrong
 Myself, so long to lose her company.
 Must I talk now? Here's to be with thee, love.
 [Kills himself.]

Enter Servant.

Serv. This is a great grace to my lord, to have the
 new king come to him: I must tell him he is entering.
 Oh, Heav'n! Help, help!

*Enter Lysippus, Melantius, Calianax, Cleon, Diphilus,
 and Strato.*

Lys. Where's Amintor?

Stra. O there, there.

Lys. How strange is this!

Cal. What should we do here?

Mel. These deaths are such acquainted things with
 me,

That yet my heart dissolves not. May I stand
 Stiff here for ever! Eyes, call up your tears.
 This is Amintor: Heart! he was my friend;
 Melt; now it flows. Amintor, give a word
 To call me to thee.

Amin. Oh!

Mel. Melantius calls his friend Amintor. Oh,
 thy arms
 Are kinder to me than thy tongue! Speak, speak.

Amin. What?

Mel. That little word was worth all the sounds
 That ever I shall hear again.

Dipb. Oh, brother!

Here

Here lies your sister slain; you lose yourself
In sorrow there.

Mel. Why, Diphilus, it is
A thing to laugh at, in respect of this:
Here was my sister, father, brother, son;
All that I had! Speak once again: What youth
Lies slain there by thee?

Amin. 'Tis Aspatia.

My last is said⁶⁰. Let me give up my soul
Into thy bosom.

[*Dies.*

Cal. What's that? what's that? Aspatia!

Mel. I never did

Repent the greatness of my heart till now:
It will not burst at need.

Cal. My daughter dead here too! And you have
all fine new tricks to grieve; but I ne'er knew any
but direct crying.

Mel. I am a prattler; but no more.

[*Offers to kill himself.*

Diph. Hold, brother.

Lys. Stop him.

Diph. Fie! how unmanly was this offer in you!
Does this become our strain?

Cal. I know not what the matter is, but I am grown
very kind, and am friends with you. You have given
me that among you will kill me quickly; but I'll go
home, and live as long as I can.

Mel. His spirit is but poor, that can be kept
From death for want of weapons.
Is not my hands a weapon sharp enough
To stop my breath? or, if you tie down those,
I vow, Amintor, I will never eat,
Or drink, or sleep, or have to do with that
That may preserve life! This I swear to keep.

⁶⁰ *My last is said.*] It seems to me, in Amintor's death, that our
Poets had a desire of imitating that of Hamlet in Shakespeare.

——— *He has my dying voice,
So tell him, with th' occurrents more and less
Which have solicited* — The rest is silence.

102 THE MAID'S TRAGEDY.

Lyf. Look to him tho', and bear those bodies in,
May this a fair example be to me,
To rule with temper : For, on lustful kings⁶¹
Unlook'd-for, sudden deaths from Heav'n are sent ;
But curst is he that is their instrument.

[*Exeunt omnes.*]

⁶¹ ——— *For on lustful kings.*] Mr. Rhymer has very justly remarked in his Criticisms on Tragedy, that as the *moral* is a lesson on the dangers attending *incontinence*, the play ought to take its name from the King : Whereas the whole distress of the story lying on Aspatia being abandoned, and the gross injury done to Amintor, the *moral*, that we have, is in no kind to the purpose. Amintor is every where, indeed, condemning himself for his perfidy to his betrothed mistress ; and inculcating, that the Heavens are strict in punishing him for that crime ; and so we have another *moral* in the body of the *fable*.
Mr. Theobald.

Mr. Rhymer and Mr. Theobald concur again in blaming our Authors for making the *title* of the play relate to the distress of Aspatia, and the *moral* at the close only to the ill consequences of vice in kings. But these gentlemen did not remember, that good writers have frequently avoided giving their plays a name which might forestall the event, and open too much of the main plot : Thus *Venice Preserv'd*, or *The Plot Discover'd*, has been blamed for discovering the plot too soon. Whereas many of Shakespeare's and our Authors' plays take their names from some character or incident that gives not the least insight into the main design. *Mr. Seward.*

We cannot help owning, that, in our opinion, there is more justice in the remark of Rhymer and Theobald, than in that of Mr. Seward.

PHILASTER;

PHILASTER;

O R,

LOVE LIES A-BLEEDING.

The Commendatory Verses by Lovelace, Stanley, and Herrick, speak of Fletcher as the sole author of this Play; those by Earle, of Beaumont. It is supposed, however, to have been wrote conjunctively. The first edition we find, was printed in 1628. This was one of the plays performed at the Old Theatre in Lincoln's Inn Fields, when the women acted alone; a prologue for it was then wrote by Mr. Dryden. In the reign of Charles II. some alterations were made in this Play, by George Villiers, duke of Buckingham; when it was entitled, "The Restoration, or Right will take Place;" but, some writers say, it was never brought on the stage. In 1695, Mr. Settle wrote a new fourth and fifth act to it, with which it was then performed. In 1766, Philaster, after having been suffered to lie many years dormant, was again introduced to the stage, with some few alterations, by George Colman, Esq. when that excellent performer, Mr. William Powell, made his first appearance, in the character of Philaster.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

M E N.

King.

Philaster, *heir to the crown.*

Pharamond, *prince of Spain.*

Dion, *a lord.*

Cleremont, }
Thrafiline, } *noble gentlemen, his associates.*

An old captain.

Five citizens.

A country fellow.

Two woodmen.

The king's guard and train.

W O M E N.

Arethusa, *the king's daughter.*

Galatea, *a wise modest lady, attending the princess.*

Megra, *a lascivious lady.*

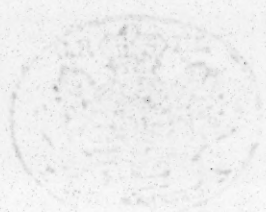
An old wanton lady, or crony¹.

Another lady attending the princess.

Euphrasia, *daughter of Dion, but disguised like a page,
and called Bellario.*

SCENE, SICILY.

¹ *An old wanton lady, or croane.*] We find this character in all the editions, but Mr. Theobald's.





Phi. Tell me when and where thou didst enjoy her,
or let Plagues fall on me, If I destroy thee not!
Bel. Heav'n knows, I never did: And when I lie to save
my Life, may I live long and loath'd.

PHILASTER.

A C T I.

Enter Dion, Cleremont, and Thrasiline.

Cleremont. HERE's nor lords nor ladies.

Dion. Credit me, gentlemen, I wonder at it. They received strict charge from the king to attend here. Besides, it was boldly published², that no officer should forbid any gentlemen that desire to attend and hear.

Cle. Can you guess the cause?

Dion. Sir, it is plain, about the Spanish prince, that's come to marry our kingdom's heir, and be our sovereign.

Thra. Many, that will seem to know much, say, she looks not on him like a maid in love.

Dion. Oh, Sir, the multitude (that seldom know any thing but their own opinions) speak that they would have; but the prince, before his own approach, receiv'd so many confident messages from the state, that I think she's resolv'd to be rul'd.

² *It was boldly publish'd.]* This adverb can have no sort of propriety here. What *boldness* is there in publishing an order from the king, that no gentleman or lady should be refused admittance? I make no doubt but it is an error of the press, and that the original word was what I have substituted for it. *Mr. Seward.*

Mr. Seward, therefore, reads *loudly*; but as we see not the least reason for such an alteration, we have followed the old copies.

Cle.

Cle. Sir, it is thought, with her he shall enjoy both these kingdoms of Sicily and Calabria.

Dion. Sir, it is, without controversy, so meant. But 'twill be a troublesome labour for him to enjoy both these kingdoms, with safety, the right heir to one of them living, and living so virtuously; especially, the people admiring the bravery of his mind, and lamenting his injuries.

Cle. Who? Philaster?

Dion. Yes; whose father, we all know, was by our late king of Calabria unrighteously depos'd from his fruitful Sicily. Myself drew some blood in those wars, which I would give my hand to be wash'd from.

Cle. Sir, my ignorance in state-policy will not let me know why, Philaster being heir to one of these kingdoms, the king should suffer him to walk abroad with such free liberty.

Dion. Sir, it seems your nature is more constant than to enquire after state news. But the king, of late, made a hazard of both the kingdoms, of Sicily and his own, with offering but to imprison Philaster. At which the city was in arms, not to be charm'd down by any state-order or proclamation, till they saw Philaster ride through the streets pleas'd, and without a guard; at which they threw their hats, and their arms from them; some to make bonfires, some to drink, all for his deliverance. Which, wise men say, is the cause the king labours to bring in the power of a foreign nation, to awe his own with.

Enter Galatea, Megra, and a lady.

Tbra. See, the ladies. What's the first?

Dion. A wise and modest gentlewoman that attends the princess.

Cle. The second?

Dion. She is one that may stand still discreetly enough, and ill-favour'dly dance her measure; simper when she is courted by her friend, and slight her husband.

Cle.

Cle. The last?

Dion. Marry, I think she is one whom the state keeps for the agents of our confederate princes. She'll cog and lye with a whole army, before the league shall break: Her name is common through the kingdom, and the trophies of her dishonour advanc'd beyond Hercules pillars. She loves to try the several constitutions of mens' bodies; and, indeed, has destroyed the worth of her own body, by making experiment upon it, for the good of the commonwealth.

Cle. She's a profitable member.

La. Peace, if you love me³! You shall see these gentlemen stand their ground, and not court us.

Gal. What if they should?

Meg. What if they should?

La. Nay, let her alone. What if they should? Why, if they should, I say they were never abroad. What foreigner would do so? It writes them directly untravell'd.

³ *Peace, if you love me.*] I have made a transposition in the speakers here, from the following accurate criticism of Mr. Seward.

Mr. Theobald.

'The character given of the last of these three ladies so exactly suits Megra, and all the speeches which the *anonymous lady* speaks, her excessive fondness for the courtship of men, and of foreigners in particular, are so entirely in her strain; that I am persuaded, she has been unjustly deprived of them. It is not the custom of any good writer to give a long and distinguishing character of, and to make a person the chief speaker in any scene, who is a mere cypher in the whole play besides: Particularly, when there is another in the same scene, to whom both the character and the speeches exactly correspond. I should guess it to have been some jumble of the players; she, who acted Megra, having given up so much of her part to initiate some younger actresses. The entrance should have been thus regulated:

'*Enter Galatea, a lady, and Megra.*

'And all the speeches of the two latter transposed.' *Mr. Seward.*

Had Mr. Seward been altering this play for representation, his right to make this transposition would certainly be allowable, but is not as an editor. It was, however, necessary to mention his conjecture. The person here speaking is doubtless the *old wanton lady, or crone*, whose character is left out of the drama in Mr. Theobald's edition.

Gal.

Gal. Why, what if they be?

Meg. What if they be?

La. Good madam, let her go on. What if they be? Why, if they be, I will justify, they cannot maintain discourse with a judicious lady, nor make a leg, nor say 'excuse me.'

Gal. Ha, ha, ha!

La. Do you laugh, madam?

Dion. Your desires upon you, ladies.

La. Then you must sit beside us.

Dion. I shall sit near you then, lady.

La. Near me, perhaps: But there's a lady induces no stranger; and to me you appear a very strange fellow.

Meg. Methinks, he's not so strange; he would quickly be acquainted.

Thra. Peace, the king.

Enter King, Pharamond, Aretbusa, and train.

King. To give a stronger testimony of love
Than sickly promises (which commonly
In princes find both birth and burial
In one breath) we have drawn you, worthy Sir,
To make your fair endearments to our daughter,
And worthy services known to our subjects,
Now lov'd and wonder'd at. Next, our intent,
To plant you deeply, our immediate heir,
Both to our blood and kingdoms. For this lady,
(The best part of your life, as you confirm me,
And I believe) though her few years and sex
Yet teach her nothing but her fears and blushes,
Desires without desire, discourse and knowledge
Only of what herself is to herself,
Make her feel moderate health; and when she sleeps,
In making no ill day, knows no ill dreams.
Think not, dear Sir, these undivided parts,
That must mould up a virgin, are put on
To shew her so, as borrow'd ornaments,

To

To speak her perfect love to you, or add
An artificial shadow to her nature :
No, Sir ; I boldly dare proclaim her, yet
No woman. But woo her still, and think her modesty
A sweeter mistress than the offer'd language
Of any dame, were she a queen, whose eye
Speaks common loves and comforts to her servants:
Last, noble son (for so I now must call you)
What I have done thus public, is not only
To add a comfort in particular
To you or me, but all ; and to confirm
The nobles, and the gentry of these kingdoms,
By oath to your succession, which shall be
Within this month at most.

Thra. This will be hardly done.

Cle. It must be ill done, if it be done.

Dion. When 'tis at best, 'twill be but half done,
whilst

So brave a gentleman's wrong'd and flung off.

Thra. I fear.

Cle. Who does not ?

Dion. I fear not for myself, and yet I fear too.
Well, we shall see, we shall see. No more.

Pha. Kissing your white hand, mistress, I take leave
To thank your royal father ; and thus far,
To be my own free trumpet. Understand,
Great king, and these your subjects, mine that must be,
(For so deserving you have spoke me, Sir,
And so deserving I dare speak myself)
To what a person, of what eminence,
Ripe expectation, of what faculties,
Manners and virtues, you would wed your kingdoms :
You in me have your wishes. Oh, this country !
By more than all my hopes I hold it happy ;
Happy, in their dear memories that have been
Kings great and good ; happy in yours, that is ;
And from you (as a chronicle to keep
Your noble name from eating age) do I

Opine

Open myself most happy⁴. Gentlemen,
 Believe me in a word, a prince's word,
 'There shall be nothing to make up a kingdom
 Mighty, and flourishing, defenced, fear'd,
 Equal to be commanded and obey'd,
 But through the travels of my life I'll find it,
 And tie it to this country. And I vow
 My reign shall be so easy to the subject,
 That ev'ry man shall be his prince himself,
 And his own law (yet I his prince and law).
 And, dearest lady, to your dearest self
 (Dear, in the choice of him whose name and lustre
 Must make you more and mightier) let me say,
 You are the blessed'st living; for, sweet princess,
 You shall enjoy a man of men, to be
 Your servant; you shall make him yours, for whom
 Great queens must die.

Thra. Miraculous!

Cle. This speech calls him Spaniard, being nothing but a large inventory of his own commendations.

Enter Philaster.

Dion. I wonder what's his price? For certainly
 He'll sell himself, he has so prais'd his shape.
 But here comes one more worthy those large speeches,
 Than the large speaker of them.
 Let me be swallow'd quick, if I can find,
 In all th' anatomy of yon man's virtues,
 One sinew found enough to promise for him,
 He shall be constable.

By this sun, he'll ne'er make king
 Unless it be for trifles, in my poor judgment.

Phi. Right noble Sir, as low as my obedience,
 And with a heart as loyal as my knee,
 I beg your favour.

King. Rife; you have it, Sir.

⁴ Open myself most happy.] Mr. Seward reads, *Do I opine it*
 [this country] *in myself most happy.*

Dion.

Dion. Mark but the king, how pale he looks with fear !

Oh! this same whorson conscience⁵, how it jades us!

King. Speak your intents, Sir.

Phi. Shall I speak 'em freely ?

Be still my royal sovereign.

King. As a subject,

We give you freedom.

Dion. Now it heats.

Phi. Then thus I turn

My language to you, Prince ; you, foreign man !

Ne'er stare, nor put on wonder, for you must

Indure me, and you shall. This earth you tread upon⁶

(A dowry, as you hope, with this fair princess)

By my dead father (oh, I had a father,

Whose memory I bow to !) was not left

To your inheritance, and I up and living ;

Having myself about me, and my sword,

The souls of all my name, and memories,

These arms, and some few friends besides the gods ;

To part so calmly with it, and sit still,

And say, ' I might have been.' I tell thee, Pharamond,

When thou art king, look I be dead and rotten,

And my name ashes : For, hear me, Pharamond !

This very ground thou goest on, this fat earth,

My father's friends made fertile with their faiths,

Before that day of shame, shall gape and swallow

Thee and thy nation, like a hungry grave,

Into her hidden bowels. Prince, it shall,

By Nemesis, it shall !

⁵ *Oh! this same whorson conscience, how it jades us !*] This sentiment Shakespeare has finely, and as concisely, express'd in his Hamlet.

'Tis conscience, that makes cowards of us all. Mr. Theobald.

⁶ ————— *This earth you tread on*

(A dowry, as you hope, with this fair princess,

Whose memory I bow to) was not left

By my dead father (Oh, I had a father)

To your inheritance, &c.] This transposition was rectified by

Mr. Seward.

Pha.

Pha. He's mad; beyond cure, mad.

Dion. Here is a fellow has some fire in's veins :
Th' outlandish prince looks like a tooth-drawer.

Pbi. Sir, prince of poppingjays, I'll make it well
appear
To you, I am not mad.

King. You displease us :
You are too bold.

Pbi. No, Sir, I am too tame,
Too much a turtle, a thing born without passion,
A faint shadow, that every drunken cloud sails over,
And makes nothing.

King. I do not fancy this.
Call our physicians : Sure he is somewhat tainted.

Thra. I do not think 'twill prove so.

Dion. H'as giv'n him a general purge already, for
all the right he has; and now he means to let him blood.
Be constant, gentlemen : By these hilts, I'll run his
hazard, although I run my name out of the kingdom.

Cle. Peace, we are all one soul.

Pha. What you have seen in me, to stir offence,
I cannot find ; unless it be this lady,
Offer'd into mine arms, with the succession ;
Which I must keep, though it hath pleas'd your fury
To mutiny within you; without disputing
Your genealogies, or taking knowledge
Whose branch you are. The king will leave it me;
And I dare make it mine. You have your answer.

Pbi. If thou wert sole inheritor to him ⁷
That made the world his, and couldst see no sun
Shine upon any thing but thine; were Pharamond
As truly valiant as I feel him cold,

⁷ *If thou wert sole inheritor to him*

Who made the world his.] i. e. Alexander the Great. So Mr.
Lee in his Tragedy of the Rival Queens.

But see, the master of the world approaches.

This is as fine an introduction, as possibly can be, to the first entrance
of that great conqueror; and raises the expectation of the audience
to give a due attention to every line he speaks. *Mr. Theobald.*

And ring'd among the choicest of his friends
(Such as would blush to talk such serious follies,
Or back such bellied commendations)
And from this presence, spite of all these bugs,
You should hear further from me.

King. Sir, you wrong the prince:
I gave you not this freedom to brave our best friends.
You deserve our frown. Go to; be better temper'd.

Phi. It must be, Sir, when I am nobler us'd.

Gal. Ladies,
This would have been a pattern of succession⁸,
Had he ne'er met this mischief. By my life,
He is the worthiest the true name of man
This day within my knowledge.

Meg. I cannot tell what you may call your know-
ledge;
But th' other is the man set in my eye.
Oh, 'tis a prince of wax!

Gal. A dog it is.

King. Philaster, tell me
The injuries you aim at, in your riddles.

Phi. If you had my eyes, Sir, and sufferance,
My griefs upon you, and my broken fortunes,
My wants great, and now nought but hopes and fears,
My wrongs would make ill riddles to be laugh'd at.
Dare you be still my king, and right me not?

King. Give me your wrongs in private. [*They whisper.*]

Phi. Take them,
And ease me of a load would bow strong Atlas.

⁸ *This would have been a pattern of succession,*

Had he ne'er met this mischief.] Mr. Symphon chuses to substitute *submission* for *succession*. I submit his conjecture to the readers, though I have not ventured to disturb the text; because the Poets, perhaps, might mean, that Philaster might have been a pattern to *succeeding* kings, had not he fallen under the misfortune of having his right to the kingdom usurped upon. *Mr. Theobald.*

There can be no doubt, if we consider the two following speeches, as well as the present, but that Mr. Theobald's explanation, though so doubtfully delivered, gives the true sense of the passage, and confirms the old reading.

Cle. He dares not stand the shock.

Dion. I cannot blame him: there's danger in't, Every man in this age has not a soul of crystal, for all men to read their actions through: Mens' hearts and faces are so far asunder, that they hold no intelligence. Do but view yon stranger well, and you shall see a fever thro' all his bravery, and feel him shake like a true recreant⁹. If he give not back his crown again, upon the report of an elder gun, I have no augury.

King. Go to!

Be more yourself, as you respect our favour;
You'll stir us else. Sir, I must have you know,
That you 're, and shall be, at our pleasure, what
fashion we

Will put upon you. Smooth your brow, or by the
gods——

Phi. I am dead, Sir; you 're my fate. It was not I
Said, I was wrong'd: I carry all about me
My weak stars lead me to, all my weak fortunes.
Who dares in all this presence speak (that is
But man of flesh, and may be mortal) tell me,
I do not most entirely love this prince,
And honour his full virtues!

King. Sure, he's possess'd.

Phi. Yes, with my father's spirit: It's here, O king!
A dangerous spirit. Now he tells me, king,
I was a king's heir, bids me be a king;
And whispers to me, these are all my subjects.
'Tis strange he will not let me sleep, but dives
Into my fancy, and there gives me shapes
That kneel, and do me service, cry me 'king':
But I'll suppress him; he's a factious spirit,
And will undo me. Noble Sir, your hand:
I am your servant.

King. Away, I do not like this:

⁹ *And feel him shake like a true tenant.*] This is the reading of the old copies; Mr. Theobald alters *tenant* to *recreant*; i. e. a person remarkable for meanness and cowardice.

I'll make you tamer, or I'll dispossess you
Both of life and spirit: For this time
I pardon your wild speech, without so much
As your imprisonment. [*Ex. King, Pha. and Are.*]

Dion. I thank you, Sir; you dare not for the people.

Gal. Ladies, what think you now of this brave fellow?

Meg. A pretty talking fellow; hot at hand. But eye yon stranger: Is he not a fine complete gentleman? Oh, these strangers, I do affect them strangely: They do the rarest home things, and please the fullest! As I live, I could love all the nation over and over for his sake.

Gal. Pride comfort your poor head-piece, lady! 'Tis a weak one, and had need of a night-cap.

Dion. See, how his fancy labours! Has he not Spoke home, and bravely? What a dang'rous train Did he give fire to! How he shook the king, Made his soul melt within him, and his blood Run into whey! It stood upon his brow, Like a cold winter dew.

Phi. Gentlemen,
You have no suit to me? I am no minion¹⁰:
You stand, methinks, like men that would be courtiers,
If you could well be flatter'd at a price,
Not to undo your children. You're all honest:
Go, get you home again, and make your country
A virtuous court; to which your great ones may,
In their diseased age, retire, and live recluse.

Cle. How do you, worthy Sir?

Phi. Well, very well;
And so well, that, if the king please, I find
I may live many years.

Dion. The king must please,
Whilst we know what you are, and who you are,
Your wrongs and injuries. Shrink not, worthy Sir,

¹⁰ *I am no minion.*] i. e. No favourite of influence enough to carry any suits at court. The word is frequently used by Shakespeare.

Mr. Theobald.

But add your father to you : In whose name¹¹,
We'll waken all the gods, and conjure up
The rods of vengeance, the abused people ;
Who, like to raging torrents, shall swell high,
And so begirt the dens of these male-dragons,
That, through the strongest safety, they shall beg
For mercy at your sword's point.

Phi. Friends, no more ;
Our ears may be corrupted : 'Tis an age
We dare not trust our wills to. Do you love me ?

Thra. Do we love Heav'n and honour ?

Phi. My lord Dion,
You had a virtuous gentlewoman call'd you father ;
Is she yet alive ?

Dion. Most honour'd Sir, she is :
And, for the penance but of an idle dream,
Has undertook a tedious pilgrimage.

Enter a Lady.—

Phi. Is it to me, or any of these gentlemen you come ?

Lady. To you, brave lord : The princess would
entreat your present company.

Phi. The princess send for me ! You are mistaken.

Lady. If you be call'd Philaster, 'tis to you.

Phi. Kifs her fair hand, and say I will attend her.

Dion. Do you know what you do ?

Phi. Yes ; go to see a woman.

Cle. But do you weigh the danger you are in ?

¹¹ ————— *In whose name*

We'll waken all the gods, and conjure up

The rods of vengeance, the abused people.] This puts me in
mind of a passage in Hesiod, in his *Ἔργα καὶ Ἡμέραι*, v. 260.

————— ὅφρ' ἀποτίσῃ

Δῆμῳ ἀταδάλιας βασιλέων

This has been generally understood, as if the people should suffer for
the faults of their prince ; and Horace is quoted in support of this
opinion.

Quicquid delirant reges, plectuntur achiui.

But would it not be better to understand it in Fletcher's words, for
the people to be rais'd up to punish the crimes and misdemeanors of
the prince ?

Mr. Symphon.

Phi.

Phi. Danger in a sweet face !
By Jupiter, I must not fear a woman.

Tbra. But are you sure it was the princess sent ?
It may be some foul train to catch your life.

Phi. I do not think it, gentlemen ; she's noble ;
Her eye may shoot me dead, or those true red
And white friends in her face may steal my soul out :
There's all the danger in't. But, be what may,
Her single name hath armed me. [*Exit Phi.*]

Dion. Go on :
And be as truly happy as thou'rt fearless.
Come, gentlemen, let's make our friends acquainted,
Lest the king prove false. [*Exeunt gentlemen.*]

Enter Arethusa and a lady.

Are. Comes he not ?

Lady. Madam ?

Are. Will Philaster come ?

Lady. Dear madam, you were wont
To credit me at first.

Are. But didst thou tell me so ?
I am forgetful, and my woman's strength
Is so o'ercharg'd with dangers like to grow:
About my marriage, that these under things
Dare not abide in such a troubled sea.
How look'd he, when he told thee he would come ?

Lady. Why, well.

Are. And not a little fearful ?

Lady. Fear, madam ? sure, he knows not what it is.

Are. Ye are all of his faction ; the whole court
Is bold in praise of him ; whilst I
May live neglected, and do noble things,
As fools in strife throw gold into the sea,
Drown'd in the doing. But, I know he fears.

Lady. Fear ? Madam, methought, his looks hid more
Of love than fear.

Are. Of love ? to whom ? to you ?
Did you deliver those plain words I sent,
With such a winning gesture, and quick look,
That you have caught him ?

Lady. Madam, I mean to you.

Are. Of love to me? alas! thy ignorance
Lets thee not see the crosses of our births.
Nature, that loves not to be questioned
Why she did this, or that, but has her ends,
And knows she does well, never gave the world
Two things so opposite, so contrary,
As he and I am: If a bowl of blood,
Drawn from this arm of mine, would poison thee,
A draught of his would cure thee. Of love to me?

Lady. Madam, I think I hear him.

Are. Bring him in.

Ye gods, that would not have your dooms withstood,
Whose holy wisdoms at this time it is,
To make the passion of a feeble maid
The way unto your justice, I obey.

Enter Philaster.

Lady. Here is my lord Philaster.

Are. Oh! 'tis well.

Withdraw yourself.

Pbi. Madam, your messenger
Made me believe you wish'd to speak with me.

Are. 'Tis true, Philaster; but the words are such
I have to say, and do so ill beseem
The mouth of woman, that I wish them said,
And yet am loth to speak them. Have you known,
That I have ought detracted from your worth?
Have I in person wrong'd you? Or have set
My baser instruments to throw disgrace
Upon your virtues?

Pbi. Never, madam, you.

Are. Why, then, should you, in such a public place,
Injure a princess, and a scandal lay
Upon my fortunes, fam'd to be so great;
Calling a great part of my dowry in question?

Pbi. Madam, this truth which I shall speak, will be
Foolish: But, for your fair and virtuous self,
I could afford myself to have no right
To any thing you wish'd.

Are.

Are. Philaster, know,
I must enjoy these kingdoms.

Pbi. Madam! Both?

Are. Both, or I die: By fate, I die, Philaster,
If I not calmly may enjoy them both.

Pbi. I would do much to save that noble life:
Yet would be loth to have posterity
Find in our stories, that Philaster gave
His right unto a sceptre, and a crown,
To save a lady's longing.

Are. Nay then, hear!
I must and will have them, and more——

Pbi. What more?

Are. Or lose that little life the gods prepar'd,
To trouble this poor piece of earth withal.

Pbi. Madam, what more?

Are. Turn, then, away thy face.

Pbi. No.

Are. Do.

Pbi. I can't endure it. Turn away my face?
I never yet saw enemy that look'd
So dreadfully, but that I thought myself
As great a basilisk as he; or spake
So horribly, but that I thought my tongue
Bore thunder underneath, as much as his;
Nor beast that I could turn from: Shall I then
Begin to fear sweet sounds? a lady's voice,
Whom I do love? Say, you would have my life;
Why, I will give it you; for it is of me
A thing so loath'd, and unto you that ask
Of so poor use, that I shall make no price:
If you entreat, I will unmoy'dly hear.

Are. Yet, for my sake, a little bend thy looks.

Pbi. I do.

Are. Then know, I must have them, and thee.

Pbi. And me?

Are. Thy love; without which, all the land
Discover'd yet, will serve me for no use,
But to be buried in.

Pbi. Is't possible?

Are. With it, it were too little to bestow
On thee. Now, though thy breath do strike me dead,
(Which, know, it may) I have unript my breast.

Pbi. Madam, you are too full of noble thoughts,
To lay a train for this contemned life,
Which you may have for asking: To suspect
Were base, where I deserve no ill. Love you,
By all my hopes, I do, above my life:
But how this passion should proceed from you
So violently, would amaze a man
That would be jealous.

Are. Another soul, into my body shot,
Could not have fill'd me with more strength and spirit,
Than this thy breath. But spend not hasty time,
In seeking how I came thus: 'Tis the gods,
The gods, that make me so; and, sure, our love
Will be the nobler, and the better blest,
In that the secret justice of the gods
Is mingled with it. Let us leave, and kifs;
Lest some unwelcome guest should fall betwixt us,
And we should part without it.

Pbi. 'Twill be ill
I should abide here long.

Are. 'Tis true; and worse
You should come often. How shall we devise
To hold intelligence, that our true loves,
On any new occasion, may agree
What path is best to tread?

Pbi. I have a boy,
Sent by the gods, I hope, to this intent,
Not yet seen in the court. Hunting the buck,
I found him sitting by a fountain-side,
Of which he borrow'd some to quench his thirst,
And paid the nymph again as much in tears.
A garland lay him by¹², made by himself,

¹² *A garland lay him by.*] Thus read the old copies. Mr. Theobald, with more freedom, and perhaps as much elegance, says, *A garland lay by him.*

Of many several flowers, bred in the bay,
 Stuck in that mystic order, that the rareness
 Delighted me: But ever when he turn'd
 His tender eyes upon 'em, he would weep,
 As if he meant to make 'em grow again,
 Seeing such pretty helpless innocence
 Dwell in his face, I ask'd him all his story.
 He told me, that his parents gentle dy'd,
 Leaving him to the mercy of the fields,
 Which gave him roots; and of the crystal springs,
 Which did not stop their courses; and the sun,
 Which still, he thank'd him, yielded him his light.
 Then took he up his garland, and did shew
 What every flower, as country people hold,
 Did signify; and how all, order'd thus,
 Express'd his grief: And, to my thoughts, did read
 The prettiest lecture of his country art
 That could be wish'd; so that, methought, I could
 Have study'd it. I gladly entertain'd him,
 Who was as glad to follow; and have got
 The trustiest, loving'st, and the gentlest boy,
 That ever master kept. Him will I send
 To wait on you, and bear our hidden love,

Enter Lady.

Are. 'Tis well; no more.

Lady. Madam, the prince is come to do his service.

Are. What will you do, Philaster, with yourself?

Phi. Why, that which all the gods have appointed
 out for me.

Are. Dear, hide thyself. Bring in the prince.

Phi. Hide me from Pharamond!

When thunder speaks, which is the voice of Jove,
 Though I do reverence, yet I hide me not;
 And shall a stranger prince have leave to brag
 Unto a foreign nation, that he made
 Philaster hide himself?

Are. He cannot know it.

Phi. Though it should sleep for ever to the world,
 It

It is a simple sin to hide myself,
Which will for ever on my conscience lie.

Are. Then, good Philaster, give him scope and way
In what he says ; for he is apt to speak
What you are loth to hear : For my sake, do.

Phi. I will.

Enter Pharamond.

Pha. My princely mistress, as true lovers ought,
I come to kiss these fair hands ; and to shew,
In outward ceremonies, the dear love
Writ in my heart.

Phi. If I shall have an answer no directlier,
I am gone.

Pha. To what would he have answer ?

Are. To his claim unto the kingdom.

Pha. Sirrah, I forbare you before the king.

Phi. Good Sir, do so still : I would not talk with
you.

Pha. But now the time is fitter : Do but offer
To make mention of your right to any kingdom,
Though it be scarce habitable——

Phi. Good Sir, let me go.

Pha. And by my sword——

Phi. Peace, Pharamond ! If thou——

Are. Leave us, Philaster.

Phi. I have done.

Pha. You are gone : By Heav'n, I'll fetch you back.

Phi. You shall not need.

Pha. What now ?

Phi. Know, Pharamond,
I loath to brawl with such a blast as thou,
Who art nought but a valiant voice : But if
Thou shalt provoke me further, men shall say
'Thou wert,' and not lament it.

Pha. Do you slight
My greatness so, and in the chamber of the princess ?

Phi. It is a place, to which, I must confess,
I owe a reverence : But were't the church,

Ay,

Ay, at the altar, there's no place so safe,
Where thou dar'st injure me, but I dare kill thee.
And for your greatness, know, Sir, I can grasp
You, and your greatness thus, thus into nothing.
Give not a word, not a word back! Farewell.

Exit Philaster.

Pha. 'Tis an odd fellow, madam: We must stop
His mouth with some office, when we are married.

Are. You were best make him your controller.

Pha. I think he would discharge it well. But,
madam,

I hope our hearts are knit; and yet, so slow
The ceremonies of state are, that 'twill be long
Before our hands be so. If then you please,
Being agreed in heart, let us not wait
For dreaming form, but take a little stol'n
Delights, and so prevent our joys to come.

Are. If you dare speak such thoughts,
I must withdraw in honour. *[Exit.*

Pha. The constitution of my body will never hold
out till the wedding. I must seek elsewhere. *[Exit,*

A C T II.

Enter Philaster and Bellario.

Phi. **A**ND thou shalt find her honourable, boy;
Full of regard unto thy tender youth,
For thine own modesty; and, for my sake,
Apt to give than thou wilt be to ask,
Ay, or deserve.

Bel. Sir, you did take me up when I was nothing;
And only yet am something, by being yours.
You trusted me unknown; and that which you were
apt

To

To construe a simple innocence in me,
 Perhaps, might have been craft; the cunning of a boy
 Hard'ned in lies and theft: Yet ventur'd you
 To part my miseries and me; for which,
 I never can expect to serve a lady
 That bears more honour in her breast than you.

Phi. But, boy, it will prefer thee. Thou art young,
 And bear'st a childish overflowing love
 To them that clap thy cheeks, and speak thee fair yet.
 But when thy judgment comes to rule those passions,
 Thou wilt remember best those careful friends,
 That plac'd thee in the noblest way of life.
 She is a princess I prefer thee to.

Bel. In that small time that I have seen the world,
 I never knew a man hasty to part
 With a servant he thought trusty: I remember,
 My father would prefer the boys he kept
 To greater men than he; but did it not
 Till they were grown too saucy for himself.

Phi. Why, gentle boy, I find no fault at all
 In thy behaviour,

Bel. Sir, if I have made
 A fault of ignorance, instruct my youth:
 I shall be willing, if not apt, to learn;
 Age and experience will adorn my mind
 With larger knowledge: And if I have done
 A wilful fault, think me not past all hope,
 For once. What master holds so strict a hand
 Over his boy, that he will part with him
 Without one warning? Let me be corrected,
 To break my stubbornness, if it be so,
 Rather than turn me off; and I shall mend.

Phi. Thy love doth plead so prettily to stay,
 That, trust me, I could weep to part with thee.
 Alas! I do not turn thee off; thou know'st
 It is my business that doth call thee hence;
 And, when thou art with her, thou dwell'st with me.
 Think so, and 'tis so. And when time is full,
 That thou hast well discharg'd this heavy trust,

Laid

Laid on so weak a one, I will again
With joy receive thee; as I live, I will.
Nay, weep not, gentle boy! 'Tis more than time
Thou didst attend the princess.

Bel. I am gone.

But since I am to part with you, my lord,
And none knows whether I shall live to do
More service for you, take this little prayer:
Heav'n bless your loves, your fights, all your de-
signs!

May sick men, if they have your wish, be well;
And Heav'n hate those you curse, though I be one!

[*Exit.*

Pbi. The love of boys unto their lords is strange;
I have read wonders of it: Yet this boy,
For my sake (if a man may judge by looks
And speech) would out-do story. I may see
A day to pay him for his loyalty. [Exit *Pbi.*

Enter Pharamond.

Pba. Why should these ladies stay so long? They
must come this way: I know the queen employs 'em
not; for the reverend mother sent me word, they
would all be for the garden. If they should all prove
honest now, I were in a fair taking. I was never so
long without sport in my life; and, in my conscience,
'tis not my fault. Oh, for our country ladies! Here's
one bolted; I'll hound at her.

Enter Galatea.

Gal. Your grace!

Pba. Shall I not be a trouble?

Gal. Not to me, Sir.

Pba. Nay, nay, you are too quick. By this sweet
hand——

Gal. You'll be forsworn, Sir; 'tis but an old glove.
If you will talk at distance, I am for you: But, good
prince, be not bawdy, nor do not brag; these two I
bar: And then, I think, I shall have sense enough to
answer

answer all the weighty apothegms your royal blood shall manage ¹³.

Pha. Dear lady, can you love?

Gal. Dear, prince! how dear? I ne'er cost you a coach yet, nor put you to the dear repentance of a banquet. Here's no scarlet, Sir, to blush the sin out it was given for. This wire mine own hair covers; and this face has been so far from being dear to any, that it ne'er cost penny painting: And, for the rest of my poor wardrobe, such as you see, it leaves no hand behind it, to make the jealous mercer's wife curse our good doings.

Pha. You mistake me, lady.

Gal. Lord, I do so: 'Would you, or I, could help it!

Pha. Do ladies of this country use to give no more respect to men of my full being?

Gal. Full being! I understand you not, unless your grace means growing to fatness; and then your only remedy (upon my knowledge, prince) is, in a morning, a cup of neat white-wine, brew'd with carduus; then fast till supper; about eight you may eat; use exercise, and keep a sparrow-hawk; you can shoot in a tiller ¹⁴: But, of all, your grace must fly phlebotomy, fresh pork, conger, and clarified whey: They are all dullers of the vital spirits.

Pha. Lady, you talk of nothing all this while.

Gal. 'Tis very true, Sir; I talk of you.

Pha. This is a crafty wench; I like her wit well; 'twill be rare to stir up a leaden appetite. She's a Danæe, and must be courted in a shower of gold. Madam, look here: All these, and more than——

¹³ *Your royal blood shall manage.*] This word is used as the French do their *mesnager*; and the Italians, *maneggiare*. So we likewise have adopted it, and say, *manage* (or, handle) a dispute or argument.

Mr. Theobald.

¹⁴ *You can shoot in a tiller;*] *i. e.* a stand; a small tree left in a wood for growth, till it is felleable: Or it may mean rather, in a steel bow; *quasi dicas*, a *steeler*: *i. e.* *Arcus chalybeatus*, as Skinner says in his *Etymologicum*.

Mr. Theobald.

Gal.

Gal. What have you there, my lord? Gold! Now, as I live, 'tis fair gold! You would have silver for it, to play with the pages: You could not have taken me in a worse time; but, if you have present use, my lord, I'll send my man with silver, and keep your gold for you.

Pha. Lady, lady!

Gal. She's coming, Sir, behind, will take white money. Yet, for all this I'll match you.

Exit Gal. behind the hangings.

Pha. If there be but two such more in this kingdom, and near the court, we may even hang up our harps. Ten such camphire constitutions as this, would call the golden age again in question, and teach the old way for every ill-fac'd husband to get his own children; and what a mischief that will breed, let all consider!

Enter Megra.

Here's another: If she be of the same last, the devil shall pluck her on. Many fair mornings, lady.

Meg. As many mornings bring as many days, Fair, sweet, and hopeful to your grace.

Pha. She gives good words yet; sure, this wench is free.

If your more serious business do not call you,
Let me hold quarter with you; we'll talk an hour
Out quickly.

Meg. What would your grace talk of?

Pha. Of some such pretty subject as yourself.
I'll go no further than your eye, or lip;
There's theme enough for one man for an age.

Meg. Sir, they stand right, and my lips are yet even,
Smooth, young enough, ripe enough, red enough,
Or my glass wrongs me.

Pha. Oh, they are two twinn'd cherries dy'd in
blushes,
Which those fair suns above, with their bright beams,
Reflect upon and ripen. Sweetest beauty,
Bow down those branches, that the longing taste
Of

Of the faint looker-on may meet those blessings,
And taste and live.

Meg. Oh, delicate sweet prince!
She that hath snow enough about her heart,
To take the wanton spring of ten such lines off,
May be a nun without probation. Sir,
You have, in such neat poetry, gather'd a kiss,
That if I had but five lines of that number,
Such pretty begging blanks, I should commend
Your forehead, or your cheeks, and kiss you too.

Pha. Do it in prose; you cannot miss it, madam.

Meg. I shall, I shall.

Pha. By my life, you shall not.

I'll prompt you first: Can you do it now?

Meg. Methinks 'tis easy, now I ha' don't before;
But yet I should stick at it.

Pha. Stick till to-morrow;

I'll ne'er part you, sweetest. But we lose time.
Can you love me?

Meg. Love you, my lord? How would you have
me love you?

Pha. I'll teach you in a short sentence, 'cause I
will not load your memory: This is all; love me, and
lie with me.

Meg. Was it lie with you, that you said? 'Tis
impossible.

Pha. Not to a willing mind, that will endeavour:
If I do not teach you to do it as easily, in one night,
as you'll go to bed, I'll lose my royal blood for't.

Meg. Why, prince, you have a lady of your own,
that yet wants teaching.

Pha. I'll sooner teach a mare the old measures,
than teach her any thing belonging to the function.
She's afraid to lie with herself, if she have but any
masculine imaginations about her. I know, when
we are married, I must ravish her.

Meg. By my honour, that's a foul fault, indeed;
but time and your good help will wear it out, Sir.

Pha. And for any other I see, excepting your dear
self,

self, dearest lady, I had rather be Sir Tim the school-master, and leap a dairy-maid.

Meg. Has your grace seen the court-star, Galatea?

Pha. Out upon her! She's as cold of her favour as an apoplex: She sail'd by but now.

Meg. And how do you hold her wit, Sir?

Pha. I hold her wit? The strength of all the guard cannot hold it, if they were tied to it; she would blow 'em out of the kingdom. They talk of Jupiter; he's but a squib-cracker to her: Look well about you, and you may find a tongue-bolt. But speak, sweet lady, shall I be freely welcome?

Meg. Whither?

Pha. To your bed. If you mistrust my faith, you do me the unnoblest wrong.

Meg. I dare not, prince, I dare not.

Pha. Make your own conditions, my purse shall seal 'em; and what you dare imagine you can want, I'll furnish you withal: Give two hours to your thoughts every morning about it. Come, I know you are bashful; speak in my ear, will you be mine? Keep this, and with it me: Soon I will visit you.

Meg. My lord, my chamber's most unsafe; but when 'tis night, I'll find some means to slip into your lodging; till when——

Pha. Till when, this, and my heart go with thee!

[*Exeunt several ways.*]

Enter Galatea from behind the hangings.

Gal. Oh, thou pernicious petticoat-prince! are these your virtues? Well, if I do not lay a train to blow your sport up, I am no woman: And, lady Dowfabel¹⁵, I'll fit you for't. [Exit.]

¹⁵ *And, lady Towfabel, I'll fit you for't.* There's no such word as Towfabel, that I know, or that is acknowledged by any of the Dictionaries. I think, by the change of a single letter, I have retriev'd the genuine word of our poets, Dowfabel. This is of French extraction, *douce et belle*; i. e. sweet and fair: But it is here intended ironically, and in derision.

Mr. Theobald.

Enter Arethusa and a Lady.

Are. Where's the boy?

Lady. Within, madam.

Are. Gave you him gold to buy him cloaths?

Lady. I did.

Are. And has he don't?

Lady. Yes, madam.

Are. 'Tis a pretty sad-talking boy, is it not?
Ask'd you his name?

Lady. No madam.

Enter Galated.

Are. Oh, you are welcome. What good news?

Gal. As good as any one can tell your grace,
That says, she has done that you would have wish'd.

Are. Hast thou discover'd?

Gal. I have strain'd a point of modesty for you.

Are. I prithee, how?

Gal. In list'ning after bawdry. I see, let a lady live
never so modestly, she shall be sure to find a lawful
time to hearken after bawdry. Your prince, brave
Pharamond, was so hot on't!

Are. With whom?

Gal. Why, with the lady I suspected: I can tell
the time and place.

Are. Oh, when, and where?

Gal. To-night, his lodging.

Are. Run thyself into the presence; mingle there
again

With other ladies; leave the rest to me.

If Destiny (to whom we dare not say,
'Why, thou did'st this') have not decreed it so
In lasting leaves (whose smallest characters
Were never altered) yet, this match shall break.
Where's the boy?

Lady. Here, madam.

Enter Bellario.

Are. Sir, you are sad to change your service; is't
not so?

Bel.

Bel. Madam, I have not chang'd; I wait on you,
To do him service.

Are. Thou disclaim'st in me.
Tell me thy name.

Bel. Bellario.

Are. Thou canst sing, and play?

Bel. If grief will give me leave, madam, I can.

Are. Alas! what kind of grief can thy years know?
Hadst thou a curst master when thou went'st to school?
Thou art not capable of other grief.

Thy brows and cheeks are smooth as waters be,
When no breath troubles them: Believe me, boy,
Care seeks out wrinkled brows and hollow eyes,
And builds himself caves, to abide in them.
Come, Sir, tell me truly, does your lord love me?

Bel. Love, madam? I know not what it is.

Are. Canst thou know grief, and never yet knew'st
love?

Thou art deceiv'd, boy. Does he speak of me,
As if he wish'd me well?

Bel. If it be love,
To forget all respect of his own friends,
In thinking of your face; if it be love,
To sit cross-arm'd, and sigh away the day,
Mingled with starts, crying your name as loud
And hastily as men i' th' streets do fire;
If it be love, to weep himself away,
When he but hears of any lady dead,
Or kill'd, because it might have been your chance;
If, when he goes to rest (which will not be)
'Twixt ev'ry prayer he says, to name you once,
As others drop a bead; be to be in love,
Then, madam, I dare swear he loves you.

Are. Oh, you're a cunning boy, and taught to lie,
For your lord's credit; but thou know'st a lie,
That bears this sound, is welcomer to me
Than any truth, that says he loves me not.
Lead the way, boy. Do you attend me too.
'Tis thy lord's business hastes me thus. Away. [*Exeunt.*

Enter Dion, Cleremont, Thrasiline, Megra, and Galatea.

Dion. Come, ladies, shall we talk a round? As men
Do walk a mile, women should talk an hour,
After supper: 'Tis their exercise.

Gal. 'Tis late.

Meg. 'Tis all
My eyes will do to lead me to my bed.

Gal. I fear, they are so heavy, you'll scarce find
The way to your lodging with 'em to night.

Enter Pharamond.

Thra. The prince!

Pha. Not a-bed, ladies? You're good fitters-up.
What think you of a pleasant dream, to last
Till morning?

Meg. I should chuse, my lord, a pleasing wake
before it.

Enter Arethusa and Bellario.

Are. 'Tis well, my lord; you're courting of ladies.
Is't not late, gentlemen?

Cle. Yes, madam.

Are. Wait you there. [Exit.

Meg. She's jealous, as I live. Look you, my lord,
The princess has a Hilar, an Adonis.

Pha. His form is angel-like.

Meg. Why, this is he must, when you are wed,
Sit by your pillow, like young Apollo, with
His hand and voice, binding your thoughts in sleep:
The princess does provide him for you, and for
herself.

Pha. I find no music in these boys.

Meg. Nor I:
They can do little, and that small they do,
They have not wit to hide.

Dion. Serves he the princess?

Thra. Yes.

Dion. 'Tis a sweet boy; how brave she keeps him.
Pha.

Pha. Ladies all, good rest; I mean to kill a buck
To-morrow morning, ere you've done your dreams.
[Exit.

Meg. All happiness attend your grace! Gentlemen,
good rest.

Come, shall we to-bed?

Gal. Yes; all good night. [Ex. *Gal. and Meg.*

Dion. May your dreams be true to you.

What shall we do, gallants? 'tis late. The king
Is up still; see, he comes; a guard along
With him.

Enter King, Arethusa, and guard.

King. Look your intelligence be true.

Are. Upon my life, it is: And I do hope,
Your highness will not tie me to a man,
That, in the heat of wooing, throws me off,
And takes another.

Dion. What should this mean?

King. If it be true,
That lady had much better have embrac'd
Cureless diseases: Get you to your rest.

[Exeunt *Are. and Bel.*

You shall be righted. Gentlemen, draw near;
We shall employ you. Is young Pharamond
Come to his lodging?

Dion. I saw him enter there.

King. Haste, some of you, and cunningly discover
If Megra be in her lodging.

Cle. Sir,
She parted hence but now, with other ladies.

King. If she be there, we shall not need to make
A vain discovery of our suspicion.

Ye gods, I see, that who unrighteously
Holds wealth, or state, from others, shall be curst
In that which meaner men are blest withall.

Ages to come shall know no male of him
Left to inherit; and his name shall be
Blotted from earth. If he have any child,

It shall be crossly match'd ; the gods themselves
 Shall sow wild strife betwixt her lord and her.
 Yet, if it be your wills, forgive the sin
 I have committed ; let it not fall
 Upon this under-standing child of mine ;
 She has not broke your laws. But how can I ¹⁶
 Look to be heard of gods, that must be just,
 Praying upon the ground I hold by wrong ?

Enter Dion.

Dion. Sir, I have asked, and her women swear she
 is within ; but they, I think, are bawds : I told 'em,
 I must speak with her ; they laugh'd, and said, their
 lady lay speechless. I said, my business was impor-
 tant ; they said, their lady was about it : I grew hot,
 and cried, my business was a matter that concerned
 life and death ; they answer'd, so was sleeping, at
 which their lady was. I urg'd again, she had scarce
 time to be so since last I saw her ; they smil'd again, and
 seem'd to instruct me, that sleeping was nothing but
 lying down and winking. Answers more direct I
 could not get : In short, Sir, I think she is not there.

King. 'Tis then no time to dally. You o'th' guard,
 Wait at the back door of the prince's lodging,
 And see that none pass thence, upon your lives.
 Knock, gentlemen ! Knock loud ! Louder yet !
 What, has their pleasure taken off their hearing ?
 I'll break your meditations. Knock again !
 Not yet ? I do not think he sleeps, having this
 Larum by him. Once more. Pharamond ! prince !

¹⁶ ————— but how can I

Look to be heard of Gods, that must be just,

Praying upon the ground I hold by wrong ?] In this sentiment
 our Authors seem to be copying Shakespeare, in a noble passage of
 his Hamlet.

————— *Forgive me my foul murther !*

That cannot be, since I am still possess'd

Of those effects for which I did the murther ;

My crown, my own ambition, and my queen.

May one be pardon'd, and retain th' offence ? &c.

Mr. Theobald.

Pharamond

Pharamond above.

Pha. What faucy groom knocks at this dead of night ?

Where be our waiters ? By my vexed foul,
He meets his death, that meets me, for this boldness.

King. Prince, you wrong your thoughts ; we are
your friends.

Come down.

Pha. The king ?

King. The same, Sir ; come down.

We have cause of present counsel with you.

Pha. If your grace please to use me, I'll attend you
To your chamber. [*Pha. below.*

King. No, 'tis too late, prince ; I'll make bold
with yours.

Pha. I have some private reasons to myself,
Make me unmannerly, and say, ' you cannot.'
Nay, press not forward, gentlemen ; he must
Come through my life, that comes here. [*Enters.*

King. Sir, be resolv'd.
I must and will come.

Pha. I'll not be dishonour'd.
He that enters, enters upon his death.
Sir, 'tis a sign you make no stranger of me,
To bring these renegadoes to my chamber,
At these unseason'd hours.

King. Why do you
Chafe yourself so ? You are not wrong'd, nor shall be ;
Only I'll search your lodging, for some cause
To ourself known : Enter, I say.

Pha. I say, no. [*Meg. above.*

Meg. Let 'em enter, prince ; let 'em enter ;
I am up, and ready ; I know their business :
'Tis the poor breaking of a lady's honour,
They hunt so hotly after ; let 'em enjoy it.
You have your business, gentlemen ; I lay here.
Oh, my lord the king, this is not noble in you
To make publick the weakness of a woman.

King. Come down.

Meg. I dare, my lord. Your whootings and your clamors,

Your private whispers, and your broad fleerings¹⁷,
Can no more vex my soul, than this base carriage.
But I have vengeance yet in store for some,
Shall, in the most contempt you can have of me,
Be joy and nourishment.

King. Will you come down?

Meg. Yes, to laugh at your worst: But I shall wring you,
If my skill fail me not.

King. Sir, I must dearly chide you for this looseness,
You have wrong'd a worthy lady; but, no more.
Conduct him to my lodging, and to-bed.

Cle. Get him another wench, and you bring him to-bed indeed.

Dion. 'Tis strange a man cannot ride a stage
Or two¹⁸, to breathe himself, without a warrant.
If this gear hold, that lodgings be search'd thus,
Pray Heav'n, we may lie with our own wives in safety,
That they be not by some trick of state mistaken.

Enter Megra.

King. Now, lady of honour, where's your honour now?

No man can fit your palate, but the prince.
Thou most ill-shrowded rottenness; thou piece
Made by a painter and a 'pothecary;
Thou troubled sea of lust; thou wilderness,
Inhabited by wild thoughts; thou swol'n cloud

¹⁷ *Your private whispers and your broad fleerings,*] This is no verse, however it has currently pass'd the ears of all the editors. The addition, which I have made, of a single syllable, both improves the sense and retrieves the metre. *Mr. Theobald.*

Mr. Theobald for *broad* reads *broader*; but as we are not of his opinion, with respect to the improvement of the sense, we have followed the old copies.

¹⁸ *To ride a stage.*] This is the reading of the old copies. *Stage* was, after some editions, corrupted into *flag*. The authors undoubtedly meant *stage*.

Of infection ; thou ripe mine of all diseases ;
Thou all sin, all hell, and last, all devils, tell me,
Had you none to pull on with your courtesies,
But he that must be mine, and wrong my daughter ?
By all the gods, all these, and all the pages,
And all the court, shall hoot thee through the court ;
Fling rotten oranges, make ribald rhymes,
And fear thy name with candles upon walls.
Do you laugh, lady Venus ?

Meg. 'Faith, Sir, you must pardon me ;
I cannot chuse but laugh to see you merry.
If you do this, oh, king ! nay, if you dare do it,
By all those gods you swore by, and as many
More of mine own ; I will have fellows, and
Such fellows in it, as shall make noble mirth.
The princess, your dear daughter, shall stand by me
On walls, and sung in ballads, any thing.
Urge me no more ; I know her and her haunts,
Her lays, leaps, and outlays, and will discover all ;
Nay, will dishonour her. I know the boy
She keeps ; a handsome boy, about eighteen ;
Know what she does with him, where, and when.
Come, Sir, you put me to a woman's madness,
The glory of a fury ; and if I do not
Do it to the height——

King. What boy is this she raves at ?

Meg. Alas ! good-minded prince, you know not
these things ?

I am loth to reveal 'em. Keep this fault,
As you would keep your health, from the hot air
Of the corrupted people, or, by Heav'n,
I will not fall alone. What I have known,
Shall be as public as a print ; all tongues
Shall speak it, as they do the language they
Are born in, as free and commonly ; I'll set it,
Like a prodigious star, for all to gaze at ;
And so high and glowing, that other kingdoms,
Far and foreign,
Shall read it there, nay, travel with it, 'till they find
No

No tongue to make it more, nor no more people;
And then behold the fall of your fair princess.

King. Has she a boy?

Cle. So please your grace, I have seen a boy wait
On her; a fair boy.

King. Go, get you to your quarter:
For this time I'll study to forget you.

Meg. Do you study to forget me, and I'll study
To forget you. [*Ex. King, Meg. and guard.*]

Cle. Why, here's a male spirit for Hercules. If
ever there be nine worthies of women, this wench
shall ride astride, and be their captain.

Dion. Sure she has a garrison of devils in her
tongue, she uttereth such balls of wild-fire. She has
so nettled the king, that all the doctors in the country
will scarce cure him. That boy was a strange-found-
out antidote to cure her infection: That boy; that
princess' boy; that brave, chaste, virtuous lady's
boy; and a fair boy, a well-spoken boy: All these
considered, can make nothing else. But there I leave
you, gentlemen.

Thra. Nay, we'll go wander with you. [*Exeunt.*]

A C T III.

Enter Cleremont, Dion, and Thrasiline.

Cle. **N**A Y, doubtless, 'tis true.

Dion. Ay; and 'tis the gods
That rais'd this punishment, to scourge the king
With his own issue. Is it not a shame
For us, that should write noble in the land,
For us, that should be freemen, to behold
A man, that is the bravery of his age,
Philaster, press'd down from his royal right,
By this regardless king? and only look
And see the sceptre ready to be cast

Into

Into the hands of that lascivious lady,
That lives in lust with a smooth boy, now to be
Married to yon strange prince, who, but that people
Please to let him be a prince, is born a slave
In that which should be his most noble part,
His mind?

Thra. That man, that would not stir with you,
To aid Philaster, let the gods forget
That such a creature walks upon the earth.

Cle. Philaster is too backward in't himself.
The gentry do await it, and the people¹⁹,
Against their nature, are all bent for him,
And like a field of standing corn, that's mov'd
With a stiff gale, their heads bow all one way.

Dion. The only cause, that draws Philaster back
From this attempt, is the fair princess' love,
Which he admires, and we can now confute.

Thra. Perhaps, he'll not believe it.

Dion. Why, gentlemen,
'Tis without question so.

Cle. Ay, 'tis past speech,
She lives dishonestly: But how shall we,
If he be curious, work upon his faith?

Thra. We all are satisfied within ourselves.

Dion. Since it is true, and tends to his own good,
I'll make this new report to be my knowledge:
I'll say I know it; nay, I'll swear I saw it.

Cle. It will be best.

Thra. 'Twill move him.

¹⁹ ——— and the people,

Against their nature, are all bent for him.] This seems, at first view, an odd passage. How are the people *against their natures* for Philaster? What, was there never any people unanimous in their choice of a governor? I take it, he must be understood, as meaning, the people (whose nature for the most part is unconstant, giddy, and wavering) are now so well assured of Philaster's worth, and right to the crown, joined to his present ill usage, that they are resolved and steady to do him justice. This is properly styled, *against their nature*, or custom.

Mr. Symphon.

Enter

Enter Philaster.

Dion. Here he comes.

Good-morrow to your honour; we have spent
Some time in seeking you.

Phil. My worthy friends,
You that can keep your memories to know
Your friend in miseries, and cannot frown
On men disgrac'd for virtue, a good day
Attend you all! What service may I do
Worthy your acceptance?

Dion. My good lord,
We come to urge that virtue, which we know
Lives in your breast, forth! Rise, and make a head,
The nobles and the people are all dull'd
With this usurping king; and not a man,
That ever heard the word, or knew such a thing
As virtue, but will second your attempts.

Phi. How honourable is this love in you
To me, that have deserv'd none? Know, my friends,
(You, that were born to shame your poor Philaster
With too much courtesy) I could afford
To melt myself in thanks: But my designs
Are not yet ripe; suffice it, that ere long
I shall employ your loves; but yet the time
Is short of what I would.

Dion. The time is fuller, Sir, than you expect:
That which hereafter will not, perhaps, be reach'd
By violence, may now be caught. As for the king,
You know the people have long hated him;
But now the princess, whom they lov'd——

Phi. Why, what of her?

Dion. Is loath'd as much as he.

Phi. By what strange means?

Dion. She's known a whore.

Phi. Thy ly'ft.

Dion. My lord——

Phi. Thou ly'ft, [Offers to draw and is held.
And thou shalt feel it. I had thought, thy mind

Had

Had been of honour. Thus to rob a lady
Of her good name, is an infectious sin,
Not to be pardon'd: Be it false as hell,
'Twill never be redeem'd, if it be sown
Amongst the people, fruitful to increase
All evil they shall hear. Let me alone,
That I may cut off falsehood, whilst it springs!
Set hills on hills betwixt me and the man
That utters this, and I will scale them all,
And from the utmost top fall on his neck,
Like thunder from a cloud.

Dion. This is most strange:
Sure he does love her.

Phi. I do love fair truth:
She is my mistress, and who injures her,
Draws vengeance from me. Sirs, let go my arms.

Thra. Nay, good my lord, be patient.

Cle. Sir, remember this is your honour'd friend,
That comes to do his service, and will shew
You why he utter'd this.

Phi. I ask you pardon, Sir;
My zeal to truth made me unmannerly:
Should I have heard dishonour spoke of you,
Behind your back untruly, I had been
As much distemper'd and enraged as now.

Dion. But this, my lord, is truth.

Phi. Oh, say not so! good Sir, forbear to say so!
'Tis then truth, that all womankind is false!
Urge it no more; it is impossible.
Why should you think the princess light?

Dion. Why, she was taken at it.

Phi. 'Tis false! Oh, Heav'n! 'tis false! it cannot be!
Can it? Speak, gentlemen; for love of truth, speak!
Is't possible? Can women all be damn'd?

Dion. Why, no, my lord.

Phi. Why, then, it cannot be.

Dion. And she was taken with her boy.

Phi. What boy?

Dion. A page, a boy that serves her.

Phi.

Phi. Oh, good gods!
A little boy?

Dion. Ay; know you him, my lord?

Phi. Hell and sin know him!—Sir, you are
deceiv'd;

I'll reason it a little coldly with you:
If she were lustful, would she take a boy,
That knows not yet desire? She would have one
Should meet her thoughts, and know the sin he acts,
Which is the great delight of wickedness.
You are abus'd, and so is she, and I.

Dion. How you, my lord?

Phi. Why, all the world's abus'd
In an unjust report.

Dion. Oh, noble Sir, your virtues
Cannot look into the subtle thoughts of woman,
In short, my lord, I took them; I myself.

Phi. Now, all the devils, thou didst! Fly from
my rage!
'Would thou hadst ta'en devils engend'ring plagues,
When thou didst take them! Hide thee from my eyes!
'Would thou hadst taken thunder on thy breast,
When thou didst take them; or been stricken dumb
For ever; that this foul deed might have slept
In silence!

Thra. Have you known him so ill-temper'd?

Cle. Never before.

Phi. The winds, that are let loose
From the four sev'ral corners of the earth;
And spread themselves all over sea and land,
Kiss not a chaste one. What friend bears a sword
To run me through?

Dion. Why, my lord, are you so mov'd at this?

Phi. When any falls from virtue, I'm distract;
I have an int'rest in't.

Dion. But, good my lord, recall yourself,
And think what's best to be done.

Phi. I thank you; I will do it.
Please you to leave me: I'll consider of it.

To-

To-morrow I will find your lodging forth,
And give you answer.

Dion. All the gods direct you
The readiest way!

Thra. He was extreme impatient.

Cle. It was his virtue, and his noble mind.

[*Exeunt Dion, Cle. and Thra.*]

Phi. I had forgot to ask him where he took them.
I'll follow him. Oh, that I had a sea
Within my breast, to quench the fire I feel!
More circumstances will but fan this fire.
It more afflicts me now, to know by whom
This deed is done, than simply that 'tis done:
And he, that tells me this, is honourable,
As far from lies as she is far from truth.
Oh, that, like beasts, we could not grieve ourselves,
With that we see not! Bulls and rams will fight
To keep their females, standing in their fight;
But take 'em from them, and you take at once
Their spleens away; and they will fall again
Unto their pastures, growing fresh and fat;
And taste the waters of the springs as sweet
As 'twas before, finding no start in sleep.
But miserable man——See, see, you gods,

Enter Bellario.

He walks still; and the face, you let him wear
When he was innocent, is still the same,
Not blasted! Is this justice? Do you mean
To intrap mortality, that you allow
Treason so smooth a brow? I cannot now
Think he is guilty.

Bel. Health to you, my lord!
The prince's doth commend her love, her life,
And this, unto you.

Phi. Oh, Bellario!
Now I perceive she loves me; she does shew it
In loving thee, my boy: Sh'as made thee brave.

Bel. My lord, she has attir'd me past my wish,
Past

Past my desert; more fit for her attendant,
Though far unfit for me, who do attend.

Phi. Thou art grown courtly, boy.—Oh, let all
women,
That love black deeds, learn to dissemble here,
Here, by this paper! She does write to me,
As if her heart were mines of adamant
To all the world besides; but, unto me,
A maiden-snow that melted with my looks.
Tell me, my boy, how doth the princess use thee?
For I shall guess her love to me by that.

Bel. Scarce like her servant, but as if I were
Something ally'd to her; or had preserv'd
Her life three times by my fidelity.
As mothers fond do use their only sons;
As I'd use one, that's left unto my trust
For whom my life should pay, if he met harm,
So she does use me.

Phi. Why, this is wondrous well:
But what kind language does she feed thee with?

Bel. Why, she does tell me, she will trust my youth
With all her loving secrets; and does call me
Her pretty servant; bids me weep no more
For leaving you; she'll see my services
Regarded; and such words of that soft strain,
That I am nearer weeping when she ends
Than ere she spake.

Phi. This is much better still.

Bel. Are you not ill, my lord?

Phi. Ill? No, Bellario.

Bel. Methinks, your words
Fall not from off your tongue so evenly,
Nor is there in your looks that quietness,
That I was wont to see.

Phi. Thou art deceiv'd, boy:
And she strokes thy head?

Bel. Yes.

Phi. And she does clap thy cheeks?

Bel. She does, my lord.

Phi.

Phi. And she does kifs thee, boy? ha!

Bel. How, my lord?

Phi. She kiffes thee?

Bel. Not so, my lord.

Phi. Come, come, I know she does.

Bel. No, by my life.

Phi. Why then she does not love me. Come, she does.
I bad her do it; I charg'd her, by all charms
Of love between us, by the hope of peace
We should enjoy, to yield thee all delights
Naked, as to her bed: I took her oath
Thou should'st enjoy her. Tell me, gentle boy,
Is she not paralleless? Is not her breath
Sweet as Arabian winds, when fruits are ripe?
Are not her breasts two liquid ivory balls?
Is she not all a lasting mine of joy?

Bel. Ay, now I see why my disturbed thoughts
Were so perplex'd: When first I went to her,
My heart held augury. You are abus'd;
Some villain has abus'd you! I do see
Whereto you tend: Fall rocks upon his head,
That put this to you: 'Tis some subtle train,
To bring that noble frame of yours to nought.

Phi. Thou think'st I will be angry with thee. Come,
Thou shalt know all my drift: I hate her more
Than I love happiness, and plac'd thee there,
To pry with narrow eyes into her deeds.
Hast thou discover'd? Is she fall'n to lust,
As I would wish her? Speak some comfort to me.

Bel. My lord, you did mistake the boy you sent:
Had she the lust of sparrows, or of goats;
Had she a sin that way, hid from the world,
Beyond the name of lust, I would not aid
Her base desires; but what I came to know
As servant to her, I would not reveal,
To make my life last ages.

Phi. Oh, my heart!
This is a salve worse than the main disease.
Tell me thy thoughts; for I will know the least

That dwells within thee, or will rip thy heart
To know it: I will see thy thoughts as plain
As I do now thy face.

Bel. Why, so you do.

She is (for ought I know) by all the gods,
As chaste as ice: But were she foul as hell,
And I did know it thus, the breath of kings,
The points of swords, tortures, nor bulls of brass²⁰,
Should draw it from me.

Pbi. Then it is no time
To dally with thee; I will take thy life,
For I do hate thee: I could curse thee now.

Bel. If you do hate, you could not curse me worse:
The gods have not a punishment in store
Greater for me, than is your hate.

Pbi. Fie, fie, so young and so dissembling!
Tell me when and where thou didst enjoy her,
Or let plagues fall on me, if I destroy thee not.

Bel. Heav'n knows I never did; and when I lie
To save my life, may I live long and loath'd.
Hew me asunder, and, whilst I can think,
I'll love those pieces you have cut away,
Better than those that grow; and kiss those limbs
Because you made 'em so.

Pbi. Fear'st thou not death?
Can boys condemn that?

Bel. Oh, what boy is he
Can be content to live to be a man,
That sees the best of men thus passionate,
Thus without reason?

Pbi. Oh, but thou dost not know
What 'tis to die.

Bel. Yes, I do know, my lord:
'Tis less than to be born; a lasting sleep,
A quiet resting from all jealousy;
A thing we all pursue. I know besides,
It is but giving over of a game that must be lost.

²⁰ *Bulls of brass.*] An explanation of this will be found in A King
and No King.

Phi. But there are pains, false boy,
For perjur'd souls: Think but on these, and then
Thy heart will melt, and thou wilt utter all.

Bel. May they fall all upon me whilst I live,
If I be perjur'd, or have ever thought
Of that you charge me with. If I be false,
Send me to suffer in those punishments
You speak of; kill me.

Phi. Oh, what should I do?
Why, who can but believe him? He does swear
So earnestly, that if it were not true,
The gods would not endure him. Rise, Bellario!
Thy protestations are so deep, and thou
Dost look so truly, when thou utter'st them,
That though I know 'em false, as were my hopes,
I cannot urge thee further. But thou wert
To blame to injure me, for I must love
Thy honest looks, and take no revenge upon
Thy tender youth: A love from me to thee
Is firm, whate'er thou dost. It troubles me
That I have call'd the blood out of thy cheeks,
That did so well become thee. But, good boy,
Let me not see thee more: Something is done,
That will distract me, that will make me mad,
If I behold thee. If thou tender'st me,
Let me not see thee.

Bel. I will fly as far
As there is morning, ere I give distaste
To that most honour'd mind. But through these tears,
Shed at my hopeless parting, I can see
A world of treason practis'd upon you,
And her, and me. Farewell, for evermore!
If you shall hear that sorrow struck me dead,
And after find me loyal, let there be
A tear shed from you in my memory,
And I shall rest at peace. [Exit.

Phi. Blessing be with thee,
Whatever thou deserv'st! Oh, where shall I
Go bathe this body? Nature, too unkind,
That made no med'cine for a troubled mind! [Exit.

Enter Arethusa.

Are. I marvel my boy comes not back again :
But that I know my love will question him
Over and over, how I slept, wak'd, talk'd ;
How I rememb'ed him when his dear name
Was last spoke, and how, when I sigh'd, wept, sung,
And ten thousand such ; I should be angry at his stay.

Enter King.

King. What, at your meditations ? Who attends you ?

Are. None but my single self. I need no guard ;
I do no wrong, nor fear none.

King. Tell me, have you not a boy ?

Are. Yes, Sir.

King. What kind of boy ?

Are. A page, a waiting-boy.

King. A handsome boy ?

Are. I think he be not ugly :
Well qualified, and dutiful, I know him ;
I took him not for beauty.

King. He speaks, and sings, and plays ?

Are. Yes, Sir.

King. About eighteen ?

Are. I never ask'd his age.

King. Is he full of service ?

Are. By your pardon, why do you ask ?

King. Put him away.

Are. Sir !

King. Put him away, h'as done you that good
service,
Shames me to speak of.

Are. Good Sir, let me understand you.

King. If you fear me,
Shew it in duty : Put away that boy.

Are. Let me have reason for it, Sir, and then
Your will is my command.

King. Do not you blush to ask it ? Cast him off,
Or I shall do the same to you. You're one

Shame

Shame with me, and so near unto myself,
That, by my life, I dare not tell myself,
What you, myself, have done.

Are. What have I done, my lord?

King. 'Tis a new language, that all love to learn:
The common people speak it well already;
They need no grammar. Understand me well;
There be foul whispers stirring. Cast him off,
And suddenly: Do it! Farewell. [*Exit King.*]

Are. Where may a maiden live securely free,
Keeping her honour safe? Not with the living;
They feed upon opinions, errors, dreams,
And make 'em truths; they draw a nourishment
Out of defamings, grow upon disgraces;
And, when they see a virtue fortify'd
Strongly above the batt'ry of their tongues,
Oh, how they cast to sink it; and, defeated,
(Soul-sick with poison) strike the monuments
Where noble names lie sleeping; till they sweat,
And the cold marble melt.

Enter Philaster.

Phi. Peace to your fairest thoughts, dearest mistress.

Are. Oh, my dearest servant, I have a war within me.

Phi. He must be more than man, that makes these
crystals

Run into rivers. Sweetest fair, the cause?
And, as I am your slave, tied to your goodness,
Your creature, made again from what I was,
And newly-spirited, I'll right your honour.

Are. Oh, my best love, that boy!

Phi. What boy?

Are. The pretty boy you gave me——

Phi. What of him?

Are. Must be no more mine.

Phi. Why?

Are. They are jealous of him.

Phi. Jealous! who?

Are. The king.

K 3 .

Phi.

Phi. Oh, my fortune !
Then 'tis no idle jealousy. Let him go.

Are. Oh, cruel ! are you hard-hearted too ?
Who shall now tell you, how much I lov'd you ?
Who shall swear it to you, and weep the tears I send ?
Who shall now bring you letters, rings, bracelets ?
Lose his health in service ? Wake tedious nights
In stories of your praise ? Who shall sing
Your crying elegies ? And strike a sad soul
Into senseless pictures, and make them mourn ?
Who shall take up his lute, and touch it, till
He crown a silent sleep upon my eye-lid,
Making me dream, and cry, ' Oh, my dear, dear
' Philaster !'

Phi. Oh, my heart !
Would he had broken thee, that made thee know
This lady was not loyal. Mistress, forget
The boy : I'll get thee a far better.

Are. Oh, never, never such a boy again, as my
Bellario !

Phi. 'Tis but your fond affection.

Are. With thee, my boy, farewell for ever
All secrecy in servants ! Farewell faith !
And all desire to do well for itself !
Let all that shall succeed thee, for thy wrongs,
Sell and betray chaste love !

Phi. And all this passion for a boy ?

Are. He was your boy, and you put him to me,
And the loss of such must have a mourning for.

Phi. Oh, thou forgetful woman !

Are. How, my lord ?

Phi. False Arethusa !

Hast thou a med'cine to restore my wits,
When I have lost 'em ? If not, leave to talk,
And do thus.

Are. Do what, Sir ? Would you sleep ?

Phi. For ever, Arethusa. Oh, ye gods,
Give me a worthy patience ! Have I stood
Naked, alone, the shock of many fortunes ?

Have

Have I seen mischiefs numberless, and mighty,
 Grow like a sea upon me ? Have I taken
 Danger as stern as death into my bosom,
 And laugh'd upon it, made it but a mirth,
 And flung it by ? Do I live now like him,
 Under this tyrant king, that languishing
 Hears his sad bell, and sees his mourners ? Do I
 Bear all this bravely, and must sink at length
 Under a woman's falshood ? Oh, that boy,
 That curst boy ! None but a villain boy
 To ease your lust ?

Are. Nay, then I am betray'd :
 I feel the plot cast for my overthrow.
 Oh, I am wretched !

Pbi. Now you may take that little right I have
 To this poor kingdom : Give it to your joy ;
 For I have no joy in it. Some far place,
 Where never womankind durst set her foot,
 For bursting with her poisons, must I seek,
 And live to curse you :
 There dig a cave, and preach to birds and beasts,
 What woman is, and help to save them from you :
 How Heav'n is in your eyes, but, in your hearts,
 More hell than hell has : How your tongues, like
 scorpions,
 Both heal and poison : How your thoughts are woven
 With thousand changes in one subtle web,
 And worn so by you : How that foolish man
 That reads the story of a woman's face,
 And dies believing it, is lost for ever :
 How all the good you have is but a shadow,
 I'th' morning with you, and at night behind you,
 Past and forgotten : How your vows are frosts,
 Fast for a night, and with the next sun gone :
 How you are, being taken all together,
 A mere confusion, and so dead a chaos,
 That love cannot distinguish. These sad texts,
 Till my last hour, I am bound to utter of you.
 So, farewell all my woe, all my delight ! [*Exit Pbi.*

Are. Be merciful, ye gods, and strike me dead !
 What way have I deserv'd this ? Make my breast
 Transparent as pure crystal, that the world,
 Jealous of me, may see the foulest thought
 My heart holds. Where shall a woman turn her eyes,
 To find out constancy ? Save me, how black

Enter Bellario.

And guiltily, methinks, that boy looks now ²¹ !
 Oh, thou dissembler, that, before thou spak'st,
 Wert in thy cradle false, sent to make lyes,
 And betray innocents ! Thy lord and thou
 May glory in the ashes of a maid
 Fool'd by her passion ; but the conquest is
 Nothing so great as wicked. Fly away !
 Let my command force thee to that, which shame
 Would do without it. If thou understood'st
 The loathed office thou hast undergone,
 Why, thou wouldst hide thee under heaps of hills,
 Lest men should dig and find thee.

Bel. Oh, what god,
 Angry with men, hath sent this strange disease
 Into the noblest minds ? Madam, this grief
 You add unto me is no more than drops
 To seas, for which they are not seen to swell :
 My lord hath struck his anger through my heart,
 And let out all the hope of future joys.
 You need not bid me fly ; I came to part,
 To take my latest leave. Farewell for ever !
 I durst not run away, in honesty,
 From such a lady, like a boy that stole,
 Or made some grievous fault. The pow'r of gods
 Assist you in your suff'rings ! Hasty time
 Reveal the truth to your abused lord

²¹ ——— Save me, how black

And guilty, methinks, that boy looks now !] Nothing betrays a corruption so evidently at the first glance, as a lameness in the metre. The *epithet* here must necessarily be turned into an *adverb*, and that supports the versification.

Mr. Theobald. •

And

And mine, that he may know your worth ; whilst I
Go seek out some forgotten place to die ! [*Exit Bel.*

Are. Peace guide thee ! Thou hast overthrown me
once ;

Yet, if I had another Troy to lose,
Thou, or another villain, with thy looks,
Might talk me out of it, and send me naked,
My hair dishevel'd, through the fiery streets.

Enter a lady.

Lady. Madam, the king would hunt, and calls
for you

With earnestness.

Are. I am in tune to hunt !

Diana, if thou canst rage with a maid
As with a man, let me discover thee
Bathing, and turn me to a fearful hind,
That I may die pursu'd by cruel hounds,
And have my story written in my wounds. [*Exeunt.*

A C T IV.

*Enter King, Pharamond, Arethusa, Galatea, Megra,
Dion, Cleremont, Thrasiline, and attendants.*

King. **W**HAT, are the hounds before, and all
the woodmen ;

Our horses ready, and our bows bent ?

Dion. All, Sir.

King. You're cloudy, Sir : Come, we have for-
gotten

Your venial trespass ; let not that sit heavy
Upon your spirit ; none dare utter it.

Dion. He looks like on old surfeited stallion after
his leaping, dull as a dormouse. See how he sinks !
The wench has shot him between wind and water, and,
I hope, sprung a leak.

Thra.

Thra. He needs no teaching, he strikes sure enough; his greatest fault is, he hunts too much in the purlieus. 'Would, he would leave off poaching!

Dion. And for his horn, h'as left it at the lodge where he lay late. Oh, he's a precious lime-hound! Turn him loose upon the pursuit of a lady, and if he lose her, hang him up i'th' slip. When my fox-bitch Beauty grows proud, I'll borrow him.

King. Is your boy turn'd away?

Are. You did command, Sir, and I obey'd you.

King. 'Tis well done. Hark ye further.

Cle. Is't possible this fellow should repent? methinks, that were not noble in him; and yet he looks like a mortified member, as if he had a sick man's salve in's mouth²². If a worse man had done this fault now, some physical justice or other would presently (without the help of an almanack) have opened the obstructions of his liver, and let him blood with a dog-whip.

Dion. See, see, how modestly yon lady looks, as if she came from churching with her neighbour. Why, what a devil can a man see in her face, but that she's honest?

Thra. Troth, no great matter to speak of²³; a

²² *And yet he looks like a mortified member, as if he had a sick man's salve in his mouth.*] We must, surely, read *flaver*. Every body must, I think, assent to this; and therefore it needs no note in confirmation.

Mr. Seward.

We beg our readers forgiveness for presenting them with this specimen of Mr. Seward's delicate ideas; but it is a justice he could not be denied, as we are determined to rob him of no part of the honour due to his ingenuity. A *small* portion, however, of that attention to the old copies, which is so *largely* boasted of by the editors of 1750, would have spared him this conjectural labour, and induced him to restore *salve* to the text.

²³ *Pha. Troth, no great matter to speak of, &c.*] How comes *Pharamond* to interpose in this argument, and reply to what *Dion*, *Cleremont*, and those whom he knew to be of *Philaster's* party, are talking of, and that *under the rose*, as we say? The speech must certainly be placed to *Thrasiline*. *Pha.* and *Thra.* (The abbreviation of the characters speaking) might easily be mistaken at press.

Mr. Theobald.

foolish

foolish twinkling with the eye, that spoils her coat; but he must be a cunning herald that finds it.

Dion. See how they muster one another! Oh, there's a rank regiment where the devil carries the colours, and his dam drum-major! Now the world and the flesh come behind with the carriage.

Cle. Sure, this lady has a good turn done her against her will: Before, she was common talk; now, none dare say, cantharides can stir her. Her face looks like a warrant, willing and commanding all tongues, as they will answer it, to be tied up and bolted when this lady means to let herself loose. As I live, she has got her a goodly protection, and a gracious; and may use her body discretely, for her health's sake, once a week, excepting Lent and Dog-days. Oh, if they were to be got for money, what a great sum would come out of the city for these licences!

King. To horse, to horse! we lose the morning, gentlemen, [Exeunt.

Enter two Woodmen.

1 *Wood.* What, have you lodg'd the deer?

2 *Wood.* Yes, they are ready for the bow.

1 *Wood.* Who shoots?

2 *Wood.* The princess.

1 *Wood.* No, she'll hunt.

2 *Wood.* She'll take a stand, I say.

1 *Wood.* Who else?

2 *Wood.* Why, the young stranger prince.

1 *Wood.* He shall shoot in a stone bow for me. I never lov'd his beyond-sea-ship, since he forsook the say, for paying ten shillings²³: He was there at the fall of a deer, and would needs (out of his mightiness)

²³ *I never lov'd his beyond-sea ship, since he forsook the say, for paying ten shillings:]* When a deer is hunted down, and to be cut up, it is a ceremony for the keeper to offer his knife to a man of the first distinction in the field, that he may rip up the belly, and take an assay of the plight and fatness of the game. But this, as the Woodman says, Pharamond declined, to save the customary fee of ten shillings.

Mr. Theobald.

give

give ten groats for the dowcets; marry, the steward would have the velvet-head into the bargain, to tuft his hat withal²⁴. I think he should love venery; he is an old Sir Tristram; for, if you be remember'd, he forsook the stag once, to strike a rascal mitching in a meadow, and her he kill'd in the eye²⁵. Who shoots else?

2 *Wood*. The lady Galatea.

1 *Wood*. That's a good wench, an she would not chide us for tumbling of her women in the brakes. She's liberal, and, by my bow, they say, she's honest; and whether that be a fault, I have nothing to do. There's all?

2 *Wood*. No, one more; Megra.

1 *Wood*. That's a firker, i'faith, boy; there's a wench will ride her haunches as hard after a kennel of hounds, as a hunting-saddle; and when she comes home, get 'em clapt, and all is well again. I have known her lose herself three times in one afternoon (if the woods have been answerable) and it has been work enough for one man to find her; and he has sweat for it. She rides well, and she pays well. Hark! let's go. [*Exeunt*.]

Enter Philaster.

Phi. Oh, that I had been²⁶ nourish'd in these woods,
With

²⁴ *Marry, the steward would have the velvet-head into the bargain, to turf his hat withal:*] What consonancy is there betwixt velvet and turf? The original word must certainly have been, *tuft*; which corresponds with the soft pile of the velvet. *Veloutè*, tufted, as the French dictionaries explain it to us. *Mr. Theobald.*

²⁵ *He forsook the stag once to strike a rascal milking in a meadow, and her he kill'd in the eye:*] A rascal is a lean deer, or doe; but what sense is there in a deer milking in a meadow? I hope I have retriev'd the true reading, *mitching*; i. e. creeping, solitary, and withdrawn from the herd. To kill her *in the eye*, is a sarcasm on Pharamond as a bad shooter; for all good ones level at the heart. *Mr. Theobald.*

²⁶ *Oh, that I had been nourish'd, &c.*] Mr. Lee, in his Theodosius, has given Varanes a speech so very similar to this, that we must look on

With milk of goats, and acorns, and not known
 The right of crowns, nor the dissembling trains
 Of womens' looks; but digg'd myself a cave,
 Where I, my fire, my cattle, and my bed,
 Might have been shut together in one shed;
 And then had taken me some mountain girl,
 Beaten with winds, chaste as the harden'd rocks
 Whereon she dwells; that might have strew'd my bed
 With leaves, and reeds, and with the skins of beasts,
 Our neighbours; and have borne at her big breasts
 My large coarse issue. This had been a life
 Free from vexation.

Enter Bellario.

Bel. Oh, wicked men!

An innocent may walk safe among beasts;
 Nothing assaults me here. See, my griev'd lord
 Sits as his soul were searching out a way
 To leave his body. Pardon me, that must
 Break thy last commandment; for I must speak.
 You, that are griev'd, can pity: Hear, my lord!

Phi. Is there a creature yet so miserable,
 That I can pity?

Bel. Oh, my noble lord!
 View my strange fortune; and bestow on me,
 According to your bounty (if my service
 Can merit nothing) so much as may serve
 To keep that little piece I hold of life
 From cold and hunger.

on it as a mere copy. Lee, however, in some parts has been more refined in his expression.

- ' Oh, that I had been born some happy swain,
- ' And never known a life so great, so vain!
- ' Where I extremes might not be forc'd to choose.
- ' And, blest with some mean wife, no crown could lose;
- ' Where the dear partner of my little state,
- ' With all her smiling offspring at the gate,
- ' Blessing my labours, might my coming wait:
- ' Where in our humble beds all safe might lie,
- ' And not in cursed courts for glory die.'

Phi.

Pbi. Is it thou? Begone!
Go, sell those misbeseeming cloaths thou wear'st,
And feed thyself with them.

Bel. Alas! my lord, I can get nothing for them:
The silly country people think 'tis treason
To touch such gay things.

Pbi. Now, by my life, this is
Unkindly done, to vex me with thy fight.
Thou'rt fall'n again to thy dissembling trade:
How shouldst thou think to cozen me again?
Remains there yet a plague untry'd for me?
Ev'n so thou wept'st, and look'd'st, and spok'st,
when first

I took thee up: Curse on the time! If thy
Commanding tears can work on any other,
Use thy art; I'll not betray it. Which way
Wilt thou take, that I may shun thee?
For thine eyes are poison to mine; and I
Am loth to grow in rage. This way, or that way?

Bel. Any will serve. But I will chuse to have
That path in chace that leads unto my grave.

[*Exeunt Pbi. and Bel. severally.*]

Enter Dion and the Woodmen.

Dion. This is the strangest sudden chance! You,
Woodman!

1 Wood. My lord Dion!

Dion. Saw you a lady come this way, on a fable
horse studded with stars of white?

2 Wood. Was she not young and tall?

Dion. Yes. Rode she to the wood or to the plain?

2 Wood. Faith, my lord, we saw none.

[*Exeunt Wood.*]

Enter Cleremont.

Dion. Pox of your questions then! What, is she
found?

Cle. Nor will be, I think.

Dion. Let him seek his daughter himself. She cannot
stray

stray about a little necessary natural business, but the whole court must be in arms : When she has done, we shall have peace.

Cle. There's already a thousand fatherless tales amongst us : Some say, her horse run away with her ; some, a wolf pursued her ; others, it was a plot to kill her, and that armed men were seen in the wood : But, questionless, she rode away willingly.

Enter King and Thrasiline.

King. Where is she ?

Cle. Sir, I cannot tell.

King. How is that ? Answer me so again !

Cle. Sir, shall I lye ?

King. Yes, lye and damn, rather than tell me that. I say again, where is she ? Mutter not !
Sir, speak you ; where is she ?

Dion. Sir, I do not know.

King. Speak that again so boldly, and, by Heav'n, It is thy last. You, fellows, answer me ;
Where is she ? Mark me, all ; I am your king ;
I wish to see my daughter ; shew her me ;
I do command you all, as you are subjects,
To shew her me ! What, am I not your king ?
If 'ay,' then am I not to be obey'd ?

Dion. Yes, if you command things possible and honest.

King. Things possible and honest ! Hear me, thou,
Thou traitor ! that dar'st confine thy king to things
Possible and honest ; shew her me,
Or, let me perish, if I cover not
All Sicily with blood !

Dion. Indeed I cannot, unless you tell me where she is.

King. You have betray'd me ; y'have let me lose
The jewel of my life : Go, bring her me,
And set her here, before me : 'Tis the king
Will have it so ; whose breath can still the winds,
Uncloud the sun, charm down the swelling sea,
And stop the floods of Heav'n. Speak, can it not ?

Dion.

Dion. No.

King. No! cannot the breath of kings do this?

Dion. No; nor smell sweet itself, if once the lungs
Be but corrupted.

King. Is it so? Take heed!

Dion. Sir, take you heed, how you dare the pow'rs
That must be just.

King. Alas! what are we kings?
Why do you, gods, place us above the rest,
To be serv'd, flatter'd, and ador'd, till we
Believe we hold within our hands your thunder;
And, when we come to try the pow'r we have,
There's not a leaf shakes at our threat'nings.
I have sinn'd, 'tis true, and here stand to be punish'd;
Yet would not thus be punish'd. Let me chuse
My way, and lay it on.

Dion. He articles with the gods: 'Would somebody
would draw bonds, for the performance of covenants
betwixt them!

Enter Pharamond, Galatea, and Megra.

King. What, is she found?

Pha. No; we have ta'en her horse:
He gallop'd empty by. There's some treason.
You, Galatea, rode with her into the wood:
Why left you her?

Gal. She did command me.

King. Command! You should not.

Gal. 'Twould ill become my fortunes and my birth,
To disobey the daughter of my king.

King. You're all cunning to obey us, for our hurt;
But I will have her.

Pha. If I have her not,
By this hand, there shall be no more Sicily.

Dion. What, will he carry it to Spain in's pocket?

Pha. I will not leave one man alive, but the king,
A cook, and a tailor.

Dion. Yet you may do well
To spare your lady-bedfellow; and her
You may keep for a spawner.

King.

King. I see the injuries I have done must be reveng'd.

Dion. Sir, this is not the way to find her out.

King. Run all; disperse yourselves! The man that finds her,

Or, (if she be kill'd) the traitor, I'll make him great.

Dion. I know some would give five thousand pounds to find her.

Pha. Come, let us seek.

King. Each man a several way; here I myself.

Dion. Come, gentlemen, we here.

Cle. Lady, you must go search too.

Meg. I had rather be search'd myself. [*Ex. omnes.*]

Enter Arethusa.

Are. Where am I now? Feet, find me out a way,
Without the counsel of my troubled head:
I'll follow you, boldly, about these woods,
O'er mountains, thorough brambles, pits, and floods.
Heaven, I hope, will ease me. I am sick.

Enter Bellario.

Bel. Yonder's my lady: Heav'n knows I want
nothing,
Because I do not wish to live; yet I
Will try her charity. Oh, hear, you that have plenty!
From that flowing store, drop some on dry ground.
See,
The lively red is gone to guard her heart!
I fear she faints. Madam, look up! She breathes not.
Open once more those rosy twins, and send
Unto my lord your latest farewell. Oh, she stirs:
How is it, madam? Speak comfort.

Are. 'Tis not gently done,
To put me in a miserable life,
And hold me there: I prithee, let me go;
I shall do best without thee; I am well.

Enter Philaster.

Phi. I am to blame to be so much in rage:
I'll tell her coolly, when and where I heard

This killing truth. I will be temperate
In speaking, and as just in hearing.

Oh, monstrous! Tempt me not, ye gods! good gods,
Tempt not a frail man! What's he, that has a heart,
But he must ease it here?

Bel. My lord, help the princess.

Are. I am well: Forbear.

Pbi. Let me love light'ning, let me be embrac'd
And kiss'd by scorpions, or adore the eyes
Of basilisks, rather than trust the tongues
Of hell-bred women! Some good gods look down,
And shrink these veins up; stick me here a stone,
Lasting to ages, in the memory
Of this damn'd act! Hear me, you wicked ones!
You have put hills of fire into this breast,
Not to be quench'd with tears; for which may guilt
Sit on your bosoms! at your meals, and beds,
Despair await you! What, before my face?
Poison of asps between your lips! Diseases
Be your best issues! Nature make a curse,
And throw it on you!

Are. Dear Philaster, leave
To be enrag'd, and hear me.

Pbi. I have done;
Forgive my passion. Not the calmed sea,
When Æolus locks up his windy brood,
Is less disturb'd than I: I'll make you know it.
Dear Arethusa, do but take this sword,
And search how temperate a heart I have;
Then you, and this your boy, may live and reign
In lust, without controul. Wilt thou, Bellario?
I prithee, kill me: Thou art poor, and may'st
Nourish ambitious thoughts, when I am dead:
This way were freer. Am I raging now?
If I were mad, I should desire to live.
Sirs, feel my pulse: Whether have you known
A man in a more equal tune to die?

Bel. Alas, my lord, your pulse keeps madman's time,
So does your tongue.

Pbi.

Phi. You will not kill me, then ?

Are. Kill you ?

Bel. Not for a world.

Phi. I blame not thee,

Bellario : Thou hast done but that, which gods
Would have transform'd themselves to do. Be gone ;
Leave me without reply ; this is the last
Of all our meeting. Kill me with this sword ;
Be wise, or worse will follow : We are two
Earth cannot bear at once. Resolve to do, or
suffer.

Are. If my fortune be so good to let me fall
Upon thy hand, I shall have peace in death.
Yet tell me this, will there be no slanders,
No jealousy, in the other world ; no ill there ?

Phi. No.

Are. Shew me, then, the way.

Phi. Then guide

My feeble hand, you that have pow'r to do it,
For I must perform a piece of justice. If your youth
Have any way offended Heav'n, let pray'rs
Short and effectual reconcile you to it.

Are. I am prepar'd.

Enter a country fellow.

Coun. I'll see the king, if he be in the forest ; I
have hunted him these two hours ; if I should come
home and not see him, my sisters would laugh at me.
I can see nothing but people better hors'd than myself,
that out-ride me ; I can hear nothing but shouting.
These kings had need of good brains ; this whooping
is able to put a mean man out of his wits. There's
a courtier with his sword drawn ; by this hand, upon
a woman, I think.

Phi. Are you at peace ?

Are. With Heav'n and earth.

Phi. May they divide thy soul and body !

Coun. Hold, dastard, strike a woman ! Thou'rt a
craven, I warrant thee : Thou would'st be loth to

L 2

play

play half a dozen of venies at wasters ²⁷ with a good fellow for a broken head.

Phi. Leave us, good friend.

Are. What ill-bred man art thou, to intrude thyself Upon our private sports, our recreations?

Coun. God uds, I understand you not; but, I know, the rogue has hurt you.

Phi. Pursue thy own affairs: It will be ill To multiply blood upon my head; Which thou wilt force me to.

Coun. I know not your rhetorick; but I can lay it on, if you touch the woman. [*They fight.*]

Phi. Slave, take what thou deserv'st.

Are. Heav'ns guard my lord!

Coun. Oh, do you breathe?

Phi. I hear the tread of people. I am hurt: The gods take part against me: Could this boor Have held me thus else? I must shift for life, Though I do loath it. I would find a course To lose it rather by my will, than force. [*Exit Phi.*]

Coun. I cannot follow the rogue. I prithee, wench, come and kifs me now.

Enter Pharamond, Dion, Cleremont, Thrasiline, and Woodmen.

Pha. What art thou?

Coun. Almost kill'd I am for a foolish woman; a knave has hurt her.

²⁷ *Thou wouldst be loth to play half a dozen of venies at wasters.*] i. e. cudgels. Minshew, in his Dictionary of Eleven Languages, has given us a most ridiculous reason for the etymology of this word: That cudgels were call'd *wasters*, because, in frequently clashing against each other, they splinter'd and *wasted*. I'll venture to advance a more probable conjecture. We find in our old law-books, that the statute of Westminster (5^o Edwardi tertii, cap. 14) was made against night-walkers, and suspected persons called roberdesmen, *wastours*, and draw-latches. These *wastours*, or plunderers, derived their name from the Latin term, *wastatores*; and thence the mischievous weapons, or bludgeons, with which they went armed, were call'd *wasters*; i. e. destroyers. *Mr. Theobald.*

Pha.

Pha. The princess, gentlemen! Where's the wound, madam?

Is it dangerous?

Are. He has not hurt me.

Coun. I'faith, she lyes; h'as hurt her in the breast; look else.

Pha. Oh, sacred spring of innocent blood!

Dion. 'Tis above wonder! Who should dare this?

Are. I felt it not.

Pha. Speak, villain, who has hurt the princess?

Coun. Is it the princess?

Dion. Ay.

Coun. Then I have seen something yet.

Pha. But who has hurt her?

Coun. I told you, a rogue; I ne'er saw him before, I.

Pha. Madam, who did it?

Are. Some dishonest wretch;

Alas! I know him not, and do forgive him.

Coun. He's hurt too; he cannot go far; I made my father's old fox fly about his ears.

Pha. How will you have me kill him?

Are. Not at all;

'Tis some distracted fellow.

Pha. By this hand,

I'll leave ne'er a piece of him bigger than a nut,
And bring him all in my hat.

Are. Nay, good Sir,

If you do take him, bring him quick to me,
And I will study for a punishment,
Great as his fault.

Pha. I will.

Are. But swear.

Pha. By all my love, I will. Woodmen, conduct the princess to the king, and bear that wounded fellow to dressing. Come, gentlemen, we'll follow the chase close.

[*Exeunt Are. Pha. Dion, Cle. Thra. and 1 Woodman.*

Coun. I pray you, friend, let me see the king.

2 Wood. That you shall, and receive thanks.

Coun. If I get clear with this, I'll go to see no more gay fights. [*Exeunt.*]

Enter Bellario.

Bel. A heaviness near death sits on my brow,
And I must sleep. Bear me, thou gentle bank,
For ever, if thou wilt. You sweet ones all,
Let me unworthy press you: I could wish,
I rather were a corse strew'd o'er with you,
Than quick above you. Dulness shuts mine eyes,
And I am giddy. Oh, that I could take
So sound a sleep, that I might never wake!

Enter Philaster.

Pbi. I have done ill; my conscience calls me false,
To strike at her, that would not strike at me.
When I did fight, methought I heard her pray
The gods to guard me. She may be abus'd,
And I a loathed villain: If she be,
She will conceal who hurt her. He has wounds,
And cannot follow; neither knows he me.
Who's this? Bellario sleeping? If thou be'st
Guilty, there is no justice that thy sleep
Should be so sound; and mine, whom thou hast
wrong'd, [*Cry within.*]
So broken. Hark! I am pursued. Ye gods,
I'll take this offer'd means of my escape:
They have no mark to know me, but my wounds,
If she be true; if false, let mischief light
On all the world at once! Sword, print my wounds
Upon this sleeping boy! I have none, I think,
Are mortal, nor would I lay greater on thee.

[*Wounds him.*]

Bel. Oh! Death, I hope, is come: Blest be that
hand!

It meant me well. Again, for pity's sake!

Pbi.

Phi. I have caught myself: [*Phi. falls.*
The loss of blood hath stay'd my flight. Here, here,
Is he that struck thee: Take thy full revenge;
Use me, as I did mean thee, worse than death:
I'll teach thee to revenge. This luckless hand
Wounded the princess; tell my followers,
Thou didst receive these hurts in staying me,
And I will second thee: Get a reward.

Bel. Fly, fly, my lord, and save yourself.

Phi. How's this?
'Wouldst thou I should be safe?

Bel. Else were it vain
For me to live. These little wounds I have
Have not bled much; reach me that noble hand;
I'll help to cover you.

Phi. Art thou true to me?

Bel. Or let me perish loath'd! Come, my good
lord,
Creep in among those bushes: Who does know,
But that the gods may save your much-lov'd breath?

Phi. Then I shall die for grief, if not for this,
That I have wounded thee. What wilt thou do?

Bel. Shift for myself well. Peace! I hear 'em come.

Within. Follow, follow, follow! that way they
went.

Bel. With my own wounds I'll bloody my own
sword.

I need not counterfeit to fall; Heav'n knows
That I can stand no longer.

Enter Pharamond, Dion, Cleremont and Thrasiline.

Pha. To this place we have track'd him by his
blood.

Cle. Yonder, my lord, creeps one away.

Dion. Stay, Sir! what are you?

Bel. A wretched creature, wounded in these woods
By beasts: Relieve me, if your names be men,
Or I shall perish.

Dion. This is he, my lord,

Upon my soul, that hurt her: 'Tis the boy,
That wicked boy, that serv'd her.

Pha. Oh, thou damn'd in thy creation!
What cause could'st thou shape to hurt the princess?

Bel. Then I am betray'd.

Dion. Betray'd! no, apprehended.

Bel. I confess,
Urge it no more, that, big with evil thoughts,
I set upon her, and did take my aim,
Her death. For charity, let fall at once
The punishment you mean, and do not load
This weary flesh with tortures.

Pha. I will know
Who hir'd thee to this deed.

Bel. Mine own revenge.

Pha. Revenge! for what?

Bel. It pleas'd her to receive
Me as her page, and, when my fortunes ebb'd,
That men strid o'er them careless, she did shower
Her welcome graces on me, and did swell
My fortunes, 'till they overflow'd their banks,
Threat'ning the men that crost 'em; when, as swift
As storms arise at sea, she turn'd her eyes
To burning suns upon me, and did dry
The streams she had bestow'd; leaving me worse,
And more condemn'd, than other little brooks,
Because I had been great. In short, I knew
I could not live, and therefore did desire
To die reveng'd.

Pha. If tortures can be found,
Long as thy natural life, resolve to feel
The utmost rigour. [*Philaster creeps out of a bush.*]

Cle. Help to lead him hence.

Phi. Turn back, you ravishers of innocence!
Know ye the price of that you bear away
So rudely?

Pha. Who's that?

Dion. 'Tis the lord Philaster.

Phi. 'Tis not the treasure of all kings in one,

The

The wealth of Tagus, nor the rocks of pearl
That pave the court of Neptune, can weigh down
That virtue ! It was I that hurt the princess.
Place me, some god, upon a Piramis,
Higher than hills of earth, and lend a voice
Loud as your thunder to me, that from thence
I may discourse to all the under-world
The worth that dwells in him !

Pha. How's this ?

Bel. My lord, some man
Weary of life, that would be glad to die.

Phi. Leave these untimely courtesies, Bellario.

Bel. Alas, he's mad ! Come, will you lead me on ?

Phi. By all the oaths that men ought most to keep,
And gods to punish most when men do break,
He touch'd her not. Take heed, Bellario,
How thou dost drown the virtues thou hast shown,
With perjury. By all that's good, 'twas I !
You know, she stood betwixt me and my right.

Pha. Thy own tongue be thy judge.

Cle. It was Philaster.

Dion. Is't not a brave boy ?

Well, Sirs, I fear me, we were all deceiv'd.

Phi. Have I no friend here ?

Dion. Yes.

Phi. Then shew it ;

Some good body lend a hand to draw us nearer.
Would you have tears shed for you when you die ?
Then lay me gently on his neck, that there
I may weep floods, and breathe out my spirit.
'Tis not the wealth of Plutus, nor the gold
Lock'd in the heart of earth, can buy away
This arm-full from me : This had been a ransom
To have redeem'd the great Augustus Cæsar,
Had he been taken. You hard-hearted men,
More stony than these mountains, can you see
Such clear pure blood drop, and not cut your flesh
To stop his life ? To bind whose bitter wounds,
Queens ought to tear their hair, and with their tears
Bathe

Bathe 'em. Forgive me, thou that art the wealth
Of poor Philaster.

Enter King, Arethusa, and a guard.

King. Is the villain ta'en?

Pha. Sir, here be two confess the deed; but, say
it was Philaster?

Phi. Question it no more; it was.

King. The fellow, that did fight with him, will
tell us that.

Are. Ah me! I know he will.

King. Did not you know him?

Are. Sir, if it was he, he was disguised.

Phi. I was so. Oh, my stars! that I should live
still.

King. Thou ambitious fool!

Thou, that hast laid a train for thy own life!

Now I do mean to do, I'll leave to talk.

Bear him to prison.

Are. Sir, they did plot together to take hence
This harmless life; should it pass unreveng'd,
I should to earth go weeping: Grant me, then,
(By all the love a father bears his child)
Their custodies, and that I may appoint
Their tortures, and their death.

Dion. Death? Soft! our law
Will not reach that, for this fault.

King. 'Tis granted; take 'em to you, with a guard.
Come, princely Pharamond, this business past,
We may with more security go on
To your intended match.

Cle. I pray, that this action lose not Philaster the
hearts of the people.

Dion. Fear it not; their over-wise heads will think
it but a trick. [*Exeunt.*]

A C T

A C T V.

Enter Dion, Cleremont, and Thrasiline.

Thra. **H**AS the king sent for him to death?
Dion. Yes; but the king must know,
'tis not in his power to war with Heav'n.

Cle. We linger time; the king sent for Philaster
and the headsman an hour ago.

Thra. Are all his wounds well?

Dion. All; they were but scratches; but the loss
of blood made him faint.

Cle. We dally, gentlemen.

Thra. Away!

Dion. We'll scuffle hard, before he perish. [*Exeunt.*]

Enter Philaster, Arethusa, and Bellario.

Are. Nay, dear Philaster, grieve not; we are well.

Bel. Nay, good my lord, forbear; we are wondrous
well.

Phi. Oh, Arethusa! oh, Bellario! leave to be kind:
I shall be shot from Heav'n, as now from earth,
If you continue so. I am a man,
False to a pair of the most trusty ones
That ever earth bore: Can it bear us all?
Forgive, and leave me! But the king hath sent
To call me to my death: Oh, shew it me,
And then forget me! And for thee, my boy,
I shall deliver words will mollify
The hearts of beasts, to spare thy innocence.

Bel. Alas, my lord, my life is not a thing
Worthy your noble thoughts: 'Tis not a life;
'Tis but a piece of childhood thrown away.
Should I out-live you, I should then out-live
Virtue and honour; and, when that day comes,
If ever I shall close these eyes but once,

May

May I live spotted for my perjury,
And waste my limbs to nothing !

Are. And I (the woful'st maid that ever was,
Forc'd with my hands to bring my lord to death)
Do, by the honour of a virgin, swear,
To tell no hours beyond it.

Phi. Make me not hated so.

Are. Come from this prison, all joyful to our deaths.

Phi. People will tear me, when they find ye true
To such a wretch as I ; I shall die loath'd.
Enjoy your kingdoms peaceably, whilst I
For ever sleep forgotten with my faults !
Ev'ry just servant, ev'ry maid in love,
Will have a piece of me, if ye be true.

Are. My dear lord, say not so.

Bel. A piece of you ?

He was not born of women that can cut
It and look on.

Phi. Take me in tears betwixt you ²³,
For else my heart will break with shame and sorrow.

Are. Why, 'tis well.

Bel. Lament no more.

Phi. What would you have done
If you had wrong'd me basely, and had found
My life no price, compar'd to yours ? For love, Sirs,
Deal with me truly.

Bel. 'Twas mistaken, Sir.

Phi. Why, if it were ?

Bel. Then, Sir, we would have ask'd you pardon.

Phi. And have hope to enjoy it ?

Are. Enjoy it ? ay.

²³ ——— take me in tears betwixt you,

For my heart will break with shame and sorrow.

Are. Why, 'tis well] The reader will see, that the second line is no verse ; and how absurd is it for the tender Arethusa to answer, that it is well that his heart will break. Beside, a flood of tears eases the heart overcharged with grief, and hinders it from breaking. By restoring the particle *else*, we shall recover both measure and sense. The tears are to prevent the bursting of his heart ; and this is what Arethusa says *is well*.

Mr. Seward.

Phi.

Phi. Would you, indeed? Be plain.

Bel. We would, my lord.

Phi. Forgive me, then.

Are. So, so.

Bel. 'Tis as it should be now.

Phi. Lead to my death.

[*Exeunt.*]

Enter King, Dion, Cleremont, and Thrafiline.

King. Gentlemen, who saw the prince?

Cle. So please you, Sir, he's gone to see the city,
And the new platform, with some gentlemen
Attending on him.

King. Is the princess ready
To bring her prisoner out?

Thra. She waits your grace.

King. Tell her we stay.

Dion. King, you may be deceiv'd yet:
The head, you aim at, cost more setting on
Than to be lost so lightly. If it must off,
Like a wild overflow, that swoops before him
A golden stack, and with it shakes down bridges,
Cracks the strong hearts of pines, whose cable roots
Held out a thousand storms, a thousand thunders,
And, so made mightier, takes whole villages
Upon his back, and in that heat of pride,
Charges strong towns, tow'rs, castles, palaces,
And lays them desolate; so shall thy head,
Thy noble head, bury the lives of thousands,
That must bleed with thee like a sacrifice,
In thy red ruins.

Enter Philaster, Arethusa, and Bellario in a robe and garland.

King. How now! what masque is this?

Bel. Right royal Sir, I should
Sing you an epithalamium of these lovers,
But, having lost my best airs with my fortunes,
And wanting a celestial harp to strike
This blessed union on, thus in glad story

I give

I give you all. These two fair cedar-branches,
 The noblest of the mountain, where they grew
 Straiteft and tallest, under whose still shades
 The worthier beasts have made their layers, and slept
 Free from the Sirian ftar, and the fell thunder-ftroke,
 Free from the clouds, when they were big with humour,
 And deliver'd, in thousand spouts, their iffues to the
 earth:

Oh, there was none but filent quiet there!
 'Till never-pleafed Fortune fhot up shrubs,
 Bafe under-brambles, to divorce thefe branches;
 And for a while they did fo; and did reign
 Over the mountain, and choak up his beauty
 With brakes, rude thorns and thiftles, till the fun
 Scorch'd them ev'n to the roots, and dry'd them there:
 And now a gentle gale hath blown again,
 That made thefe branches meet, and twine together,
 Never to be divided. The god, that fings
 His holy numbers over marriage-beds,
 Hath knit their noble hearts, and here they ftand
 Your children, mighty king; and I have done.

King. How, how?

Are. Sir, if you love it in plain truth,
 (For there's no mafquing ²⁹ in't) this gentleman,
 The prifoner that you gave me, is become
 My keeper, and through all the bitter throes
 Your jealousies and his ill fate have wrought him,
 Thus nobly hath he ftuggled, and at length
 Arriv'd here my dear husband.

King. Your dear husband! Call in
 The captain of the citadel; there you fhall keep
 Your wedding. I'll provide a mafque fhall make

²⁹ For now there is no mafquing in't.] Here Mr. Theobald, whose paffion for interpolating mischievous monofyllables exceeds not only example but credibility, puzzles us with the word *now*. Arethufa does not mean to fay there had been any *mafquing*, which *now* implies, but to reply to the king's queftion at the beginning of the fcene, *What mafque is this?*—'Sir, if Bellario is too florid, underftand, in plain truth (for there is no mafquing in it), that my prifoner is become my keeper.'

Your Hymen turn his saffron into a fullen coat,
 And sing sad requiems to your departing souls :
 Blood shall put out your torches ; and, instead
 Of gaudy flow'rs about your wanton necks,
 An axe shall hang like a prodigious meteor,
 Ready to crop your loves' sweets. Hear, ye gods !
 From this time do I shake all title off
 Of father to this woman, this base woman ;
 And what there is of vengeance, in a lion
 Cast among dogs, or robb'd of his dear young,
 The same, enforc'd more terrible, more mighty,
 Expect from me !

Are. Sir, by that little life I have left to swear by,
 There's nothing that can stir me from myself.
 What I have done, I've done without repentance ;
 For death can be no bugbear unto me,
 So long as Pharamond is not my headsmen.

Dion. Sweet peace upon thy soul, thou worthy maid,
 Whene'er thou diest ! For this time I'll excuse thee,
 Or be thy prologue.

Phi. Sir, let me speak next ;
 And let my dying words be better with you
 Than my dull living actions. If you aim
 At the dear life of this sweet innocent,
 You are a tyrant and a savage monster ;
 Your memory shall be as foul behind you,
 As you are, living ; all your better deeds³⁰
 Shall be in water writ, but this in marble ;
 No chronicle shall speak you, though your own,
 But for the shame of men. No monument

³⁰ ————— all your better deeds

Shall be in water writ, but this in marble :] This sentiment seems to have been shadow'd out from Shakespeare in his King Henry the Eighth.

*Mens evil manners live in brass, their virtues
 We write in water.*

Tho' perhaps, our several poets might have had Catullus for their original.

In vento & rapidâ scribere oportet aquâ. Mr. Theobald.

(Though

(Though high and big as Pelion³¹) shall be able
 To cover this base murder: Make it rich
 With brass, with purest gold, and shining jasper,
 Like the Pyramids; lay on epitaphs,
 Such as make great men gods; my little marble
 (That only clothes my ashes, not my faults)
 Shall far out-shine it. And, for after issues,
 Think not so madly of the heav'nly wisdoms,
 That they will give you more for your mad rage
 To cut off, 'less it be some snake, or something
 Like yourself, that in his birth shall strangle you:
 Remember my father, king! There was a fault,
 But I forgive it. Let that sin persuade you
 To love this lady: If you have a soul,
 Think, save her, and be saved. For myself,
 I have so long expected this glad hour,
 So languish'd under you, and daily wither'd,
 That, Heaven knows, it is my joy to die:
 I find a recreation in't.

Enter a Messenger.

Mes. Where's the king?

King. Here.

Mes. Get you to your strength,
 And rescue the prince Pharamond from danger:
 He's taken prisoner by the citizens,
 Fearing the lord Philaster.

Dion. Oh, brave followers!
 Mutiny, my fine dear countrymen, mutiny!
 Now, my brave valiant foremen, shew your weapons
 In honour of your mistresses.

³¹ (*Tho' high and big as Pelion*), &c.] Some of the old quarto's ridiculously have it *Pelican*; (as, I remember, some of the old editions of Shakespeare read *Politician* instead of *Pelican*.) The true reading, undoubtedly, is *Pe-ion*, a mountain very amply celebrated by the classics; and mentioned by our own choicest classic in his *Hamlet*.

*Now pile your dust upon the quick and dead,
 Till of this flat a mountain you have made
 T' o'er-top old Pelion, or the skyish head
 Of blue Olympus.*

Mr. Theobald.

Enter

Enter another Messenger.

Mes. Arm, arm, arm!

King. A thousand devils take 'em!

Dion. A thousand blessings on 'em!

Mes. Arm, oh, king! The city is in mutiny,
Led by an old grey ruffian, who comes on
In rescue of the lord Philaster.

[*Exit with Arc. Phi. Bel.*]

King. Away to th' citadel: I'll see them safe,
And then cope with these burghers. Let the guard
And all the gentlemen give strong attendance. [*Exit.*]

Manent Dion, Cleremont, Thrasiline.

Cle. The city up! this was above our wishes.

Dion. Ay, and the marriage too. By my life,
This noble lady has deceiv'd us all.
A plague upon myself, a thousand plagues,
For having such unworthy thoughts of her dear
honour!

Oh, I could beat myself! or, do you beat me,
And I'll beat you; for we had all one thought.

Cle. No, no, 'twill but lose time.

Dion. You say true. Are your swords sharp?
Well, my dear countrymen What-ye-lack³², if you
continue, and fall not back upon the first broken
shin, I'll have you chronicled and chronicled, and
cut and chronicled, and sung in all-to-be-praised
sonnets, and grav'd in new brave ballads, that all
tongues shall trouble you in *secula seculorum*, my kind
can-carriers³³.

Thra.

³² *Well, my dear countrymen, what ye lack,*] We apprehend *What ye lack* to be a name given to, or epithet intended to depict, the lower class of tradesmen and shopkeepers.

³³ *I'll have you chronicled, and chronicled, and cut and chronicled, and all-to-be-prais'd, and sung in sonnets, and bath'd in new brave ballads, that all tongues shall trouble you in secula seculorum, my kind can-carriers.*] I thought this for a long time to be such desperate nonsense, that the meaning of the Poets would be quite irretrievable,

Thra. What if a toy take 'em i' th' heels now, and they run all away, and cry, 'the devil take the 'hindmost³⁴?'

Dion. Then the same devil take the foremost too, and fouse him for his breakfast! If they all prove cowards, my curses fly amongst them, and be speeding! May they have murrains rain to keep the gentlemen at home, unbound in easy frieze! May the moths branch their velvets, and their silks only be worn before fore eyes! May their false lights undo 'em, and discover presses, holes, stains, and oldness in their stuffs, and make them shop-rid! May they keep whores and horses, and break; and live mewed up with necks of beef and turnips! May they have many children, and none like the father! May they know no language but that gibberish they prattle to their parcels³⁵; unless it be the³⁶ Gothick Latin they write in their bonds; and may they write that false, and lose their debts!

Enter the King.

King. Now the vengeance of all the gods confound

as no one of the editions give the least glimpse of light or assistance. But (thanks to plodding industry!) I hope, I have found the certain cure.

Mr. Theobald.

³⁴ *And cry, the devil take the hindmost.] Occupet extremum scabies,* says Horace: To which execration, no doubt, our Authors had an eye.

Mr. Theobald.

We rather imagine, our Authors looked *down* to the mob, than *up* to Horace, for this long-used vulgar phrase.

³⁵ *They prattle to their parcels.] Shakespeare, as well as our Authors, uses the word parcels as a contemptuous mode of expressing companions, families, or sometimes auditors.*

³⁶ *Unless it be the goarish Latin]* Thus the folio edition in 1679; but there is no such word in English, and, consequently, it is stark nonsense. The quarto of 1628 has it, *goatish*; but there is nothing wanton, or lascivious, in a bond; therefore, this reading is as unmeaning as the other. I dare warrant, that I have retriev'd the Authors' genuine text, in the word *Gothick*; *i. e. barbarous*: No greater *barbarisms* than in Law Latin. So, in Wit without Money,

No more sense spoke, all things Goth and Vandal.

Mr. Theobald.

them,

them, how they swarm together ! What a hum they raise ! Devils choke your wild throats ! If a man had need to use their valours, he must pay a brokage for it, and then bring 'em on, and they will fight like sheep. 'Tis Philaster, none but Philaster, must allay this heat : They will not hear me speak, but fling dirt at me, and call me tyrant. Oh, run, dear friend, and bring the lord Philaster : Speak him fair ; call him prince ; do him all the courtesy you can ; commend me to him ! Oh, my wits, my wits ! [*Exit Cle.*]

Dion. Oh, my brave countrymen ! as I live, I will not buy a pin out of your walls for this : Nay, you shall cozen me, and I'll thank you ; and send you brawn and bacon, and foil you every long vacation a brace of foremen, that at Michaelmas shall come up fat and kicking.

King. What they will do with this poor prince, the gods know, and I fear.

Dion. Why, Sir, they'll flea him, and make church-buckets on's skin, to quench rebellion ; then clap a rivet in's sconce, and hang him up for a sign.

Enter Cleremont with Philaster.

King. Oh, worthy Sir, forgive me ! Do not make Your miseries and my faults meet together,
To bring a greater danger. Be yourself,
Still found amongst diseases. I have wrong'd you,
And though I find it last, and beaten to it,
Let first your goodness know it. Calm the people,
And be what you were born to : Take your love,
And with her my repentance, and my wishes,
And all my pray'rs. By th' gods, my heart speaks
this ;

And if the least fall from me not perform'd,
May I be struck with thunder !

Phi. Mighty Sir,
I will not do your greatness so much wrong,
As not to make your word truth. Free the princess,
And the poor boy, and let me stand the shock

Of this mad sea-breach; which I'll either turn,
Or perish with it.

King. Let your own word free them.

Phi. Then thus I take my leave, kissing your hand,
And hanging on your royal word. Be kingly,
And be not mov'd, Sir: I shall bring you peace
Or never bring myself back.

King. All the gods go with thee! [Exeunt.

Enter an old captain and citizens, with Pharamond.

Cap. Come, my brave myrmidons, let's fall on!
let our caps swarm, my boys, and your nimble tongues
forget your mothers gibberish, of what do you lack,
and set your mouths up, children, till your palates
fall frightened, half a fathom past the cure of bay-salt
and gross pepper. And then cry Philaster, brave
Philaster! Let Philaster be deeper in request, my
ding-dongs, my pairs of dear indentures, kings of
clubs, than your cold water camlets, or your paint-
ings spotted with copper³⁷. Let not your hasty silks,
or your branch'd cloth of bodkin, or your tissues,
dearly beloved of spiced cake and custard, your Robin-
hoods, Scarlets and Johns, tie your affections in dark-
ness to your shops. No, dainty duckers, up with
your three-pil'd spirits, your wrought valours; and
let your uncut choler make the king feel the measure
of your mightiness. Philaster! cry, my rose-nobles,
cry.

All. Philaster! Philaster!

Cap. How do you like this, my lord prince? These
are mad boys, I tell you; these are things that will
not strike their top-sails to a foist; and let a man of
war, an argosy³⁸, hull and cry cockles.

Phi.

³⁷ ————— or your paintings

Spitted *with copper*.] This to me is quite unintelligible; I have
ventured to substitute *spotted*; i. e. sprinkled with copper, as our
painted papers for hangings are, to resemble gold, and look gaudy.

Mr. Theobald.

³⁸ *An argosy hull and cry cockles.*] Any large vessel, so called from
Jason's

Pha. Why, you rude slave, do you know what you do?

Cap. My pretty prince of puppets, we do know; and give your greatness warning, that you talk no more such bug-words, or that sold'red crown shall be scratch'd with a musquet. Dear prince Pippen, down with your noble blood; or, as I live, I'll have you coddled. Let him loose, my spirits! Make us a round ring with your bills, my Hectors, and let us see what this trim man dares do. Now, Sir, have at you! Here I lie, and with this swashing blow (do you sweat, prince?) I could hulk your grace, and hang you up cross-legg'd, like a hare at a poulter's³⁹, and do this with this wiper.

Pha. You will not see me murder'd, wicked villains?

Cit. Yes, indeed, will we, Sir: We have not seen one foe a great while⁴⁰.

Cap. He would have weapons, would he? Give him a broadside, my brave boys, with your pikes; branch me his skin in flowers like a fatten, and between every flower a mortal cut. Your royalty shall ravel! Jag him, gentlemen: I'll have him cut to the kell, then down the seams. Oh, for a whip to make him galloon-laces! I'll have a coach-whip.

Pha. Oh, spare me, gentlemen!

Cap. Hold, hold; the man begins to fear, and know himself; he shall for this time only be feel'd up,

Jason's large ship Argo. A vessel is said to *bull*, when she floats, or rides idle to and fro upon the water. *Mr. Theobald.*

A *foist* is an old word for a smaller vessel. So, in Ben Jonson's *Silent Woman*, 'When the *galley foist* is afloat to Westminster.'

³⁹ *Like a hare at a poulter's.*] We now say *poulterer*; however, there is a company in the city of London, which still retains its old name of *Poulters*.

⁴⁰ *Yes, indeed, will we, Sir; we have not seen one foe a great while.*] This is a typographical error, which, however, makes nonsense of the passage. *Foe* is mistakenly put for *so*. *Mr. Symphon.*

We apprehend the old reading, *foe*, to be right; and that this passage is meant to express their not having for a long time been engaged in war.

with a feather through his nose ⁴¹, that he may only see Heaven, and think whither he is going. Nay, my beyond-sea Sir, we will proclaim you: You would be king! Thou tender heir apparent to a church-ale, thou slight prince of single farcenet; thou royal ring-tail ⁴², fit to fly at nothing but poor mens' poultry, and have every boy beat thee from that too with his bread and butter!

Pha. Gods keep me from these hell-hounds!

² *Cit.* Shall's geld him, captain?

Cap. No, you shall spare his dowcets, my dear dontels; as you respect the ladies, let them flourish: The curses of a longing woman kill as speedy as a plague, boys.

¹ *Cit.* I'll have a leg, that's certain.

² *Cit.* I'll have an arm.

³ *Cit.* I'll have his nose, and at mine own charge build a college, and clap it upon the gate.

⁴ *Cit.* I'll have his little gut to string a kit with; for, certainly, a royal gut will sound like silver.

Pha. 'Would they were in thy belly, and I past my pain once!

⁵ *Cit.* Good captain, let me have his liver to feed ferrets.

Cap. Who will have parcels else? speak.

Pha. Good gods, consider me! I shall be tortur'd.

¹ *Cit.* Captain, I'll give you the trimming of your two-hand sword, and let me have his skin to make false scabbards.

² *Cit.* He has no horns, Sir, has he ⁴³?

⁴¹ *He shall for this time only be seal'd up, with a feather through the nose.*] There is a difference, which the printers did not know; betwixt *seal'd* and *feel'd*; the latter is a term in falconry. When a hawk is first taken, a thread is run through its eyelids, so that she may see very little, to make her the better endure the hood.

Mr. Theobald.

⁴² *Thou royal ring-tail*] A *ring-tail* is a sort of a kite, with a whitish tail.

Mr. Theobald.

⁴³ *He had no horns, Sir, had he?*] We have made a small alteration here, which, from the other parts of the dialogue, seems absolutely necessary.

Cap. No, Sir, he's a pollard ⁴⁴. What would'st thou do with horns?

² *Cit.* Oh, if he had, I would have made rare hafts and whistles of 'em; but his shin-bones, if they be found, shall serve me.

Enter Philaster.

All. Long live Philaster, the brave prince Philaster!

Phi. I thank you, gentlemen. But why are these Rude weapons brought abroad, to teach your hands Uncivil trades?

Cap. My royal Rosiclear,
We are thy myrmidons, thy guard, thy roarers!
And when thy noble body is in durance,
Thus do we clap our musty murrions on,
And trace the streets in terror. Is it peace,
Thou Mars of men? Is the king sociable,
And bids thee live? Art thou above thy foemen,
And free as Phœbus? Speak. If not, this stand
Of royal blood shall be abroach, a-tilt,
And run even to the lees of honour.

Phi. Hold, and be satisfied: I am myself;
Free as my thoughts are: By the gods, I am.

Cap. Art thou the dainty darling of the king?
Art thou the Hylas to our Hercules?
Do the lords bow, and the regarded scarlets
Kiss their gum'd golls ⁴⁵, and cry, 'we are your
servants?'

Is the court navigable, and the presence stuck
With flags of friendship? If not, we are thy castle,
And this man sleeps.

Phi. I am what I do desire to be, your friend;
I am what I was born to be, your prince.

⁴⁴ *No, Sir, he's a pollard.*] A *pollard*, among gardeners, is an old tree which has been often lopped; but, among hunters, a stag, or male-deer, which has cast its head, or horns. *Mr. Theobald.*

⁴⁵ *Kiss their gum'd golls.*] *Golls*, as we learn from Dr. Johnson, means *hands*, or *paws*; wherefore we thus understand this sentence: 'Are the principal courtiers so warm in their salutations, that, in kissing their *hands*, they eagerly press them to their *gums*?' Mr. Theobald reads, *kiss the gum-golls*.

Pha. Sir, there is some humanity in you ;
 You have a noble soul ; forget my name,
 And know my misery : Set me safe aboard
 From these wild canibals, and, as I live,
 I'll quit this land for ever. There is nothing,
 Perpetual 'prisonment⁴⁶, cold, hunger, sickness
 Of all sorts, of all dangers, and all together,
 The worst company of the worst men, madness, age,
 To be as many creatures as a woman,
 And do as all they do ; nay, to despair ;
 But I would rather make it a new nature,
 And live with all those, than endure one hour
 Amongst these wild dogs.

Phi. I do pity you. Friends, discharge your fears ;
 Deliver me the prince : I'll warrant you,
 I shall be old enough to find my safety.

3 Cit. Good Sir, take heed he does not hurt you :
 He's a fierce man, I can tell you, Sir.

Cap. Prince, by your leave, I'll have a surcingle,
 and mail you like a hawk. [*He stirs.*]

Phi. Away, away ; there is no danger in him :
 Alas, he had rather sleep to shake his fit off.
 Look ye, friends, how gently he leads. Upon my
 word,

He's tame enough, he needs no further watching.
 Good my friends, go to your houses,
 And by me have your pardons, and my love ;
 And know, there shall be nothing in my pow'r
 You may deserve, but you shall have your wishes.
 To give you more thanks, were to flatter you.

⁴⁶ *Perpetual prisonment, cold, hunger, sickness,*

All dangers of all sorts, and all together,] In this manner Mr. Seward alters these lines ; and, indeed, we think his alteration preferable to the old reading, in our text.

The same gentleman complains of there being *great difficulties* in the latter part of this speech. It is very probable, Mr. Seward conceived our Authors to have had a deeper meaning in it than they really had ; otherwise, we know not where the difficulty lies. We apprehend the Poets intended Pharamond simply to declare, that he had rather suffer any thing, than to be thus baited any longer by the mob.

Continue still your love; and, for an earnest,
Drink this.

All. Long may'st thou live, brave prince! brave
prince!

Brave prince!

Ex. Phi. and Pha.

Cap. Thou art the king of courtesy!

Fall off again, my sweet youths. Come, and every
man trace to his house again, and hang his pewter
up; then to the tavern, and bring your wives in
muffs. We will have music; and the red grape shall
make us dance, and rise, boys. [*Exeunt.*]

*Enter King, Arethusa, Galatea, Megra, Cleremont, Dion,
Thrasiline, Bellario, and attendants.*

King. Is it appears'd?

Dion. Sir, all is quiet as the dead of night⁴⁷,
As peaceable as sleep. My lord Philaster
Brings on the prince himself.

King. Kind gentleman⁴⁸!

I will not break the least word I have giv'n
In promise to him: I have heap'd a world
Of grief upon his head, which yet I hope
To wash away.

Enter Philaster and Pharamond.

Cle. My lord is come.

King. My son!

Blest be the time, that I have leave to call
Such virtue mine! Now thou art in mine arms,
Methinks I have a salve unto my breast,
For all the stings that dwell there. Streams of grief

⁴⁷ *Sir, all is quiet as this dead of night.]* There is no hint of the
scene being at midnight; we must therefore read *the* dead of night.

Mr. Seward.

⁴⁸ ————— *My lord Philaster*

Brings on the prince himself. *King.* *Kind gentlemen!]* It is
plain, that the king is speaking here of the kindness of Philaster in
appeasing the people, and redeeming Pharamond; and not of the
kindness of Dion, and the others present, who only informed him of
it. We must therefore read *gentleman.*

Mr. Seward.

That

That I have wrong'd thee, and as much of joy
That I repent it, issue from mine eyes :
Let them appease thee. Take thy right ; take her ;
She is thy right too ; and forget to urge
My vexed soul with that I did before.

Phi. Sir, it is blotted from my memory,
Past and forgotten. For you, prince of Spain,
Whom I have thus redeem'd, you have full leave
To make an honourable voyage home.
And if you would go furnish'd to your realm
With fair provision, I do see a lady,
Methinks, would gladly bear you company :
How like you this piece ?

Meg. Sir, he likes it well ;
For he hath tried it, and found it worth
His princely liking. We were ta'en a-bed ;
I know your meaning. I am not the first
That Nature taught to seek a fellow forth :
Can shame remain perpetually in me,
And not in others ? or, have princes salves
To cure ill names, that meaner people want ?

Phi. What mean you ?

Meg. You must get another ship,
To bear the princess and the boy together.

Dion. How now !

Meg. Others took me, and I took her and him
At that all women may be ta'en some time.
Ship us all four, my lord ; we can endure
Weather and wind alike.

King. Clear thou thyself, or know not me for father.

Are. This earth, how false it is ! What means is left
For me to clear myself ? It lies in your belief.
My lords, believe me ; and let all things else
Struggle together to dishonour me.

Bel. Oh, stop your ears, great king, that I may speak
As freedom would ; then I will call this lady
As base as be her actions ! Hear me, Sir :
Believe your heated blood when it rebels
Against your reason, sooner than this lady.

Meg.

Meg. By this good light, he bears it handsomely.

Phi. This lady? I will sooner trust the wind
With feathers, or the troubled sea with pearl,
Than her with any thing. Believe her not!
Why, think you, if I did believe her words,
I would outlive 'em? Honour cannot take
Revenge on you; then, what were to be known
But death?

King. Forget her, Sir, since all is knit
Between us. But I must request of you
One favour, and will sadly be denied ⁴⁹.

Phi. Command, whate'er it be.

King. Swear to be true
To what you promise.

Phi. By the pow'rs above,
Let it not be the death of her or him,
And it is granted.

King. Bear away that boy
To torture: I will have her clear'd or buried.

Phi. Oh, let me call my words back, worthy Sir!
Ask something else! Bury my life and right
In one poor grave; but do not take away
My life and fame at once.

King. Away with him! It stands irrevocable.

Phi. Turn all your eyes on me: Here stands a man,
The falsest and the basest of this world.
Set swords against this breast, some honest man,
For I have liv'd till I am pitied!
My former deeds were hateful, but this last
Is pitiful; for I, unwillingly,
Have given the dear preserver of my life
Unto his torture! Is it in the pow'r
Of flesh and blood to carry this, and live?

[Offers to kill himself.]

Are. Dear Sir, be patient yet! Oh, stay that hand.

King. Sirs, strip that boy.

⁴⁹ ——— And will sadly be denied.] i. e. shall be very sorry
to be denied. Mr. Theobald.

Dion. Come, Sir; your tender flesh will try your constancy.

Bel. Oh, kill me, gentlemen!

Dion. No! Help, Sirs.

Bel. Will you torture me?

King. Haste there! why stay you?

Bel. Then I shall not break my vow,
You know, just gods, though I discover all.

King. How's that? will he confess?

Dion. Sir, so he says.

King. Speak then.

Bel. Great king, if you command
This lord to talk with me alone, my tongue,
Urg'd by my heart, shall utter all the thoughts
My youth hath known; and stranger things than these
You hear not often.

King. Walk aside with him.

Dion. Why speak'st thou not?

Bel. Know you this face, my lord?

Dion. No.

Bel. Have you not seen it, nor the like?

Dion. Yes, I have seen the like, but readily
I know not where.

Bel. I have been often told
In court of one Euphrasia, a lady,
And daughter to you; betwixt whom and me
They, that would flatter my bad face, would swear
There was such strange resemblance, that we two
Could not be known asunder, dress'd alike.

Dion. By Heav'n, and so there is.

Bel. For her fair sake,
Who now doth spend the spring-time of her life
In holy pilgrimage, move to the king,
That I may 'scape this torture.

Dion. But thou speak'st
As like Euphrasia, as thou dost look.
How came it to thy knowledge that she lives
In pilgrimage?

Bel. I know it not, my lord;

But

But I have heard it ; and do scarce believe it.

Dion. Oh, my shame ! Is't possible ? Draw near,
That I may gaze upon thee. Art thou she,
Or else her murderer ? Where wert thou born ?

Bel. In Siracusa.

Dion. What's thy name ?

Bel. Euphrasia.

Dion. Oh, 'tis just, 'tis she !

Now I do know thee. Oh, that thou hadst died,
And I had never seen thee nor my shame !
How shall I own thee ? shall this tongue of mine
E'er call thee daughter more ?

Bel. 'Would I had died indeed ; I wish it too :
And so I must have done by vow, ere published
What I have told, but that there was no means
To hide it longer. Yet I joy in this,
The princess is all clear.

King. What have you done ?

Dion. All is discover'd.

Phi. Why then hold you me ?

[He offers to stab himself.]

All is discover'd ! Pray you, let me go.

King. Stay him.

Are. What is discover'd ?

Dion. Why, my shame !

It is a woman : Let her speak the rest.

Phi. How ? that again !

Dion. It is a woman.

Phi. Bless'd be you pow'rs that favour innocence !

King. Lay hold upon that lady.

Phi. It is a woman, Sir ! Hark, gentlemen !

It is a woman ! Arethusa, take
My soul into thy breast, that would be gone
With joy. It is a woman ! Thou art fair,
And virtuous still to ages, in despite of malice.

King. Speak you, where lies his shame ?

Bel. I am his daughter.

Phi. The gods are just.

Dion. I dare accuse none ; but, before you two,

The

The virtue of our age, I bend my knee
For mercy.

Phi. Take it freely ; for, I know,
Though what thou didst were indiscretely done,
'Twas meant well.

Are. And for me,
I have a power to pardon sins, as oft
As any man has power to wrong me.

Cle. Noble and worthy !

Phi. But, Bellario,
(For I must call thee still so) tell me why
Thou didst conceal thy sex ? It was a fault ;
A fault, Bellario, though thy other deeds
Of truth outweigh'd it : All these jealousies
Had flown to nothing, if thou hadst discover'd
What now we know.

Bel. My father oft would speak ⁵⁰
Your worth and virtue ; and, as I did grow
More and more apprehensive, I did thirst
To see the man so prais'd ; but yet all this
Was but a maiden longing, to be lost
As soon as found ; till sitting in my window,
Printing my thoughts in lawn, I saw a god,
I thought, (but it was you) enter our gates.
My blood flew out, and back again as fast,
As I had puff'd it forth and suck'd it in
Like breath : Then was I call'd away in haste
To entertain you. Never was a man,
Heav'd from a sheep-cote to a sceptre, rais'd
So high in thoughts as I : You left a kiss
Upon these lips then, which I mean to keep

⁵⁰ ——— *My father oft would speak, &c.]* The beauty, the innocence, of Euphrasia's character is finely depicted in this narration from her own mouth. Our poets, when they intended it, seldom fail'd in the art of moving the passions. The young lady from her father's encomiums first, had fallen in love with Philaster ; tho' she knew, that she could have no pretensions to his bed. But as her next, and only, happiness was to live in his sight, she disguis'd her sex, and enter'd into his service. Her resolution, and vow, never to marry any other, is a fine heightning of her character. *Mr. Theobald.*

From you for ever. I did hear you talk,
 Far above fing'ring! After you were gone,
 I grew acquainted with my heart, and search'd
 What stir'd it so: Alas! I found it love;
 Yet far from lust; for could I but have liv'd
 In presence of you, I had had my end.
 For this I did delude my noble father
 With a feign'd pilgrimage, and dress'd myself
 In habit of a boy; and, for I knew
 My birth no match for you, I was past hope
 Of having you; and understanding well,
 That when I made discov'ry of my sex,
 I could not stay with you, I made a vow,
 By all the most religious things a maid
 Could call together, never to be known,
 Whilst there was hope to hide me from mens' eyes,
 For other than I seem'd, that I might ever
 Abide with you: Then sat I by the fount,
 Where first you took me up.

King. Search out a match
 Within our kingdom, where and when thou wilt,
 And I will pay thy dowry; and thyself
 Wilt well deserve him.

Bel. Never, Sir, will I
 Marry; it is a thing within my vow:
 But if I may have leave to serve the princess,
 To see the virtues of her lord and her,
 I shall have hope to live.

Are. I, Philaster,
 Cannot be jealous, though you had a lady
 Dress'd like a page to serve you; nor will I
 Suspect her living here. Come, live with me;
 Live free as I do. She that loves my lord,
 Curst be the wife that hates her!

Pbi. I grieve such virtues should be laid in earth
 Without an heir. Hear me, my royal father:
 Wrong not the freedom of our souls so much,
 To think to take revenge of that base woman;
 Her malice cannot hurt us. Set her free

As

As she was born, saving from shame and sin.

King. Set her at liberty; but leave the court;
This is no place for such! You, Pharamond,
Shall have free passage, and a conduct home
Worthy so great a prince. When you come there,
Remember, 'twas your faults that lost you her,
And not my purpos'd will.

Pha. I do confess,
Renowned Sir.

King. Last, join your hands in one. Enjoy, Philaster,
This kingdom, which is yours, and after me
Whatever I call mine. My blessing on you!
All happy hours be at your marriage-joys,
That you may grow yourselves over all lands,
And live to see your plenteous branches spring
Where-ever there is sun! Let princes learn
By this, to rule the passions of their blood,
For what Heav'n wills can never be withstood.

[*Exeunt omnes.*]

A KING





*Now has my age deserv'd so ill of you,
That you can pick no strumpets i' the land,
But out of my breed!*

Act V.

Barralet delin.

Grignion sculp.

A KING AND NO KING.

The Commendatory Verses by Howard and Herrick ascribe this Play to Fletcher; by Earle, to Beaumont. The first edition bears date 1619. Notwithstanding its prodigious merit, it has not been performed for many years past; nor do we find that it ever received any alterations. The sudden bursts, and quick transitions of passion, in the character of Arbaces, are, however, supposed to have given rise to a burlesque drama, or parody (by Tate) sometimes represented, under the title of "Duke and No Duke."

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

M E N.

Arbaces, *king of Iberia.*

Tigranes, *king of Armenia.*

Gobrias, *lord-protector, and father of Arbaces.*

Bacurius, *another lord.*

Mardonius, }
Bessus, } *two captains.*

Ligones, *father of Spaconia.*

Two gentlemen.

Two Sword-men.

W O M E N.

Arane, *the queen-mother*¹.

Panthea, *her daughter.*

Spaconia, *a lady, daughter of Ligones.*

Mandane, *a waiting-woman; and other attendants.*

Three men and a woman.

Philip, *a servant and two citizens' wives.*

A messenger.

A servant to Bacurius.

A boy.

SCENE, *on the frontiers of ARMENIA; and, afterwards,
in the metropolis of Iberia*².

¹ *Arane, the queen's mother.*] The trifling alteration we have here made is not only necessary, but warranted by different passages in the play. In the beginning of the third act we find, 'And the queen-mother and the princess wait.'

² *Scene, on the frontiers, &c.*] For this information we are indebted to Mr. Theobald.

A KING

A KING AND NO KING.

A C T I.

*Enter Mardonius and Bessus*³.

Mardonius. **B**ESSUS, the king has made a fair hand on't; he has ended the wars at a blow. 'Would my sword had a close basket hilt, to hold wine, and the blade would make knives; for we shall have nothing but eating and drinking.

Bes. We that are commanders shall do well enough.

Mar. Faith, Bessus, such commanders as thou may: I had as lieve set thee *perdue* for a pudding i'th' dark, as Alexander the Great.

Bes. I love these jests exceedingly.

Mar. I think thou lov'st 'em better than quarrelling, Bessus; I'll say so much in thy behalf. And

³ The character of Bessus, I think, must be allowed in general a fine copy from Shakespeare's inimitable Falstaffe. He is a coward, yet would fain set up for a hero; ostentatious, without any grain of merit to support his vain-glory; a liar throughout, to exalt his assumed qualifications; and lewd, without any countenance from the ladies to give him an umbrage for it. As to his wit and humour, the precedence must certainly be adjudged to Falstaffe, the great original.

Mr. Theobald.

To these remarks on the character of Bessus, it may not be improper to add, that it has a strong Bobadilian tincture, and that, in all probability, the *Miles Gloriosus* of Plautus, and *Thraſo* of Terence, furnished both Jonson and our Authors with hints for the respective characters. Falstaffe is more an original.

196 A KING AND NO KING.

yet thou'rt valiant enough upon a retreat : I think thou wouldst kill any man that stop'd thee, if thou couldst.

Bes. But was not this a brave combat, Mardonius ?

Mar. Why, didst thou see it ?

Bes. You stood wi' me.

Mar. I did so ; but methought thou wink'd'st every blow they struck.

Bes. Well, I believe there are better soldiers than I, that never saw two princes fight in lists.

Mar. By my troth, I think so too, Bessus ; many a thousand : But, certainly, all that are worse than thou have seen as much.

Bes. 'Twas bravely done of our king.

Mar. Yes, if he had not ended the wars. I'm glad thou dar'st talk of such dangerous businesses.

Bes. To take a prince prisoner in the heart of his own country, in single combat.

Mar. See, how thy blood curdles at this ! I think thou couldst be contented to be beaten i' this passion.

Bes. Shall I tell you truly ?

Mar. Ay.

Bes. I could willingly venture for it.

Mar. Hum ! no venture neither, Bessus.

Bes. Let me not live, if I do not think 'tis a braver piece of service than that I'm so fam'd for.

Mar. Why, art thou fam'd for any valour ?

Bes. Fam'd ? I warrant you.

Mar. I'm e'en heartily glad on't : I have been with thee e'er since thou cam'st to the wars, and this is the first word that ever I heard on't. Prithee, who fames thee ?

Bes. The Christian world.

Mar. 'Tis heathenishly done of 'em, in my conscience : Thou deserv'st it not.

Bes. Yes, I ha' done good service.

Mar. I do not know how thou may'st wait of a man in's chamber, or thy agility in shifting of a trencher ; but otherwise no service, good Bessus.

Bes.

A KING AND NO KING. 197

Bef. You saw me do the service yourself.

Mar. Not so hasty, sweet Bessus! Where was it?
is the place vanish'd?

Bef. At Bessus' Desp'rate Redemption.

Mar. At Bessus' Desp'rate Redemption! where's
that?

Bef. There, where I redeem'd the day; the place
bears my name.

Mar. Prithee, who christen'd it?

Bef. The soldiers.

Mar. If I were not a very merrily-disposed man,
what would become of thee? One that had but a
grain of choler in the whole composition of his body,
would send thee on an errand to the worms, for put-
ting thy name upon that field: Did not I beat thee
there, i'th' head o'th' troops, with a truncheon, because
thou wouldst needs run away with thy company, when
we should charge the enemy?

Bef. True; but I did not run.

Mar. Right, Bessus: I beat thee out on't.

Bef. But came I not up when the day was gone,
and redeem'd all?

Mar. Thou knowest, and so do I, thou meant'st
to fly, and thy fear making thee mistake, thou ran'st
upon the enemy; and a hot charge thou gav'st; as,
I'll do thee right, thou art furious in running away;
and, I think, we owe thy fear for our victory. If I
were the king, and were sure thou wouldst mistake
always, and run away upon th' enemy, thou shouldst
be general, by this light.

Bef. You'll never leave this, till I fall foul.

Mar. No more such words, dear Bessus; for though
I have ever known thee a coward, and therefore durst
never strike thee, yet if thou proceed'st, I will allow
thee valiant, and beat thee.

Bef. Come, our king's a brave fellow.

Mar. He is so, Bessus; I wonder how thou cam'st
to know it. But, if thou wert a man of understand-
ing, I would tell thee, he is vain-glorious and humble,

198 A KING AND NO KING.

and angry and patient, and merry and dull, and joyful and sorrowful, in extremity, in an hour. Do not think me thy friend, for this; for if I car'd who knew it, thou shouldst not hear it, Bessus. Here he is, with his prey in his foot.

Enter Arbaces, Tigranes, and two gentlemen.

Arb. Thy sadness, brave Tigranes, takes away
From my full victory: Am I become
Of so small fame, that any man should grieve
When I o'ercome him? They that plac'd me here,
Intended it an honour, large enough
For the most valiant living, but to dare
Oppose me single, though he lost the day.
What should afflict you? You're as free as I.
To be my prisoner, is to be more free
Than you were formerly. And never think,
The man, I held worthy to combat me,
Shall be us'd servilely. Thy ransom is,
To take my only sister to thy wife:
A heavy one, Tigranes; for she is
A lady, that the neighbour princes send
Blanks to fetch home. I have been too unkind
To her, Tigranes: She, but nine years old,
I left her, and ne'er saw her since: Your wars
Have held me long, and taught me, though a youth,
The way to victory. She was a pretty child;
Then, I was little better; but now fame
Cries loudly on her, and my messengers
Make me believe she is a miracle.
She'll make you shrink, as I did, with a stroke,
But of her eye, Tigranes.

Tigr. Is't the course
Of Iberia to use her prisoners thus?
Had fortune thrown my name above Arbaces',
I should not thus have talk'd, Sir; In Armenia,
We hold it base. You should have kept your temper
Till you saw home again, where 'tis the fashion,
Perhaps, to brag.

Arb.

Arb. Be you my witnesses, earth,
 Need I to brag? Doth not this captive prince
 Speak me sufficiently, and all the acts
 That I have wrought upon his suffering land?
 Should I then boast? Where lies that foot of ground,
 Within his whole realm, that I have not past,
 Fighting and conquering: Far then from me
 Be ostentation. I could tell the world,
 How I have laid his kingdom desolate,
 By this sole arm, prop'd by divinity;
 Stript him out of his glories; and have sent
 The pride of all his youth to people graves;
 And made his virgins languish for their loves;
 If I would brag. Should I, that have the pow'r
 To teach the neighbour world humility,
 Mix with vain-glory?

Mar. Indeed, this is none. [Aside.]

Arb. Tigranes, nay, did I but take delight
 To stretch my deeds as others do, on words,
 I could amaze my hearers.

Mar. So you do.

Arb. But he shall wrong his and my modesty,
 That thinks me apt to boast: After an act
 Fit for a god to do upon his foe,
 A little glory in a soldier's mouth
 Is well-becoming; be it far from vain.

Mar. 'Tis pity, that valour should be thus drunk. [Aside.]

Arb. I offer you my sister, and you answer,
 I do insult: A lady that no suit,
 Nor treasure, nor thy crown, could purchase thee,
 But that thou fought'st with me.

Tigr. Though this be worse
 Than that you spake before, it strikes me not;
 But, that you think to over-grace me with
 The marriage of your sister, troubles me.
 I would give worlds for ransoms, were they mine,
 Rather than have her.

Arb. See, if I insult,

200 A KING AND NO KING.

That am the conqueror, and for a ransom
Offer rich treasure to the conquered,
Which he refuses, and I bear his scorn?
It cannot be self-flattery to say,
The daughters of your country, set by her,
Would see their shame, run home, and blush to death
At their own foulness. Yet she is not fair,
Nor beautiful; those words express her not:
They say, her looks have something excellent,
That wants a name. Yet, were she odious,
Her birth deserves the empire of the world:
Sister to such a brother; that hath ta'en
Victory prisoner, and throughout the earth
Carries her bound, and, should he let her loose,
She durst not leave him. Nature did her wrong,
To print continual conquest on her cheeks,
And make no man worthy for her to taste,
But me, that am too near her; and as strangely
She did for me: But you will think I brag.

Mar. I do, I'll be sworn. Thy valour and thy
passions sever'd, would have made two excellent fel-
lows in their kinds. I know not, whether I should
be sorry thou art so valiant, or so passionate: 'Would
one of 'em were away! [*Aside.*]

Tigr. Do I refuse her, that I doubt her worth?
Were she as virtuous as she would be thought;
So perfect, that no one of her own sex
Could find a want she had⁴; so tempting fair,
That she could wish it off, for damning souls⁵;
I would

⁴ *Could find a want, had she so tempting fair,*

That she could wish it off, &c.] Thus say the copies prior to
Mr. Theobald, who (without noticing it) alters the passage thus;

Could find a want; Were she so tempting fair, &c.

The deficiency of sense in the old copies, we apprehend, was occa-
sioned by one of those errors which the press is most subject to, a
transposition.

⁵ *so tempting fair,*

That she could wish it off, for damning souls] This passage is
so obscure in the expression, that, I believe, it will want a short com-
ment

I would pay any ransom, twenty lives,
Rather than meet her married in my bed.
Perhaps, I have a love, where I have fix'd
Mine eyes, not to be mov'd, and she on me :
I am not fickle.

Arb. Is that all the cause ?

Think you, you can so knit yourself in love
To any other, that her searching sight
Cannot dissolve it ? So, before you try'd,
You thought yourself a match for me in fight :
Trust me, Tigranes, she can do as much
In peace, as I in war ; she'll conquer too.
You shall see, if you have the pow'r to stand
The force of her swift looks ⁶. If you dislike,
I'll send you home with love, and name your ransom
Some other way ; but if she be your choice,
She frees you. To Iberia you must.

Tigr. Sir I have learn'd a prisoner's sufferance,

ment to the generality of readers. The Authors mean, ' Were she
' so temptingly fair, that she could wish to be less beauteous, for
' fear of damning souls, in their coveting to enjoy her charms, &c.'
So, Shakespeare in his Othello ;

A fellow almost damn'd in a fair wife,

i. e. grown so uxorious through the attractions of her beauty, as to
neglect all his duty towards Heaven, and consequently incur the dan-
ger of damnation. This sentiment is explained in another passage of
that immortal author, in his Merchant of Venice.

it is very meet

The lord Bassanio live an upright life.

For, having such a blessing in his lady,

He finds the joys of Heaven here on earth ;

And if on earth he do not merit it,

In reason he should never come to Heav'n. Mr. Theobald.

⁶ *if you have the power to stand*

The force of her swift looks.] Both Mr. Seward and Mr. Symp-
son chuse to adopt the epithet *sweet*. I have not ventur'd to alter
the text ; because I think the word *swift* is more consonant to *force*,
i. e. the power of her keen, pointed glances ; as Arbaces speaks of
her a little above ;

She'll make you shrink, as I did, with a stroke,

But of her eye, Tigranes.

Mr. Theobald.

And

202 A KING AND NO KING.

And will obey : But give me leave to talk
In private with some friends before I go.

Arb. Some do await him forth, and see him safe;
But let him freely fend for whom he please,
And none dare to disturb his conference;
I will not have him know what bondage is,

[*Exit Tigranes.*]

'Till he be free from me. This prince, Mardonius,
Is full of wisdom, valour, all the graces
Man can receive.

Mar. And yet you conquer'd him.

Arb. And yet I conquer'd him; and could have
done 't,

Hadst thou join'd with him, though thy name in arms
Be great. Must all men, that are virtuous,
Think suddenly to match themselves with me?
I conquer'd him, and bravely, did I not?

Bef. An please your majesty, I was afraid at first—

Mar. When wert thou other?

Arb. Of what?

Bef. That you would not have spy'd your best ad-
vantages; for your majesty, in my opinion, lay too
high; methinks, under favour, you should have lain
thus.

Mar. Like a taylor at a wake.

Bef. And then, if't please your majesty to re-
member, at one time——by my troth, I wish'd my-
self wi' you.

Mar. By my troth thou wouldst ha' stunk 'em both
out o'th' lists.

Arb. What to do?

Bef. To put your majesty in mind of an occasion:
You lay thus, and Tigranes falsified a blow at your
leg, which you, by doing thus, avoided; but, if you
had whipp'd up your leg thus, and reach'd him on
the ear, you had made the blood-royal run down his
head.

Mar. What country fence-school learn'dst that at?

Arb. Pish! did not I take him nobly?

Mar.

A KING AND NO KING. 203

Mar. Why, you did, and you have talk'd enough on't.

Arb. Talk'd enough?

Will you confine my words? By Heav'n and earth,
I were much better be a king of beasts
Than such a people! If I had not patience
Above a god, I should be call'd a tyrant,
Throughout the world! They will offend to death
Each minute: Let me hear thee speak again,
And thou art earth again. Why, this is like
Tigranes' speech, that needs would say I brag'd.
Bessus, he said, I brag'd.

Bes. Ha, ha, ha!

Arb. Why dost thou laugh?

By all the world, I'm grown ridiculous
To my own subjects. Tie me in a chair,
And jest at me! But I shall make a start,
And punish some, that others may take heed
How they are haughty. Who will answer me?
He said I boasted: Speak, Mardonius,
Did I? He will not answer. Oh, my temper!
I give you thanks above, that taught my heart
Patience; I can endure his silence. What, will none
Vouchsafe to give me answer? Am I grown
To such a poor respect? or do you mean
To break my wind? Speak, speak, some one of you,
Or else, by Heav'n——

Gent. So please your——

Arb. Monstrous!

I cannot be heard out; they cut me off,
As if I were too faucy. I will live
In woods, and talk to trees; they will allow me
To end what I begin. The meanest subject
Can find a freedom to discharge his soul,
And not I. Now it is a time to speak;
I hearken.

Gent. May it please——

Arb. I mean not you;
Did not I stop you once? But I am grown

To

204 A KING AND NO KING.

To talk ! ⁷ But I defy——Let another speak.

2 Gent. I hope your majesty——

Arb. Thou drawl'st thy words,
That I must wait an hour, where other men
Can hear in infants : Throw your words away
Quick, and to purpose ; I have told you this.

Bes. An please your majesty——

Arb. Wilt thou devour me ? This is such a rudeness
As yet you never shew'd me : And I want
Pow'r to command too ; else, Mardonius
Would speak at my request. Were you my king,
I would have answer'd at your word, Mardonius.
I pray you speak, and truly, did I boast ?

Mar. Truth will offend you.

Arb. You take all great care what will offend me,
When you dare to utter such things as these.

Mar. You told Tigranes, you had won his land
With that sole arm, prop'd by divinity :
Was not that bragging, and a wrong to us
That daily ventur'd lives ?

Arb.

⁷ ——— Put I am grown

To balk, *but I defy, let another speak*] So stands this passage
in the elder editions. Mr. Seward makes this alteration,

————— *but I am grown*

To talk *but idly ; let another speak,*

and subjoins the following note :

‘ As it may be some entertainment to the curious reader to see
‘ an humble critic poring in the dark, if he by that means has at
‘ last opened the door to day-light, I will give the process of this
‘ emendation. Every one must see, that the text, as it stood, was
‘ absolutely nonsense : and Mr. Theobald informed me, that it has
‘ stood so through all the editions : and, not having hit upon any
‘ emendation himself, he had looked upon it as one of the *loci des-*
‘ *perati* of our Authors. It is easy to observe, that the sense re-
‘ quired must be either, *that I am grown not to have what I say ob-*
‘ *served* : or, *to have my will contradicted in every thing*. I had
‘ advanced several conjectures, but they departed too much from
‘ the traces of the letters. In rejecting them, therefore, I observed,
‘ that had any of them been clear, as to the sense ; yet they made
‘ a syllable too much in the verse. Nothing is so great an assistance
‘ in retrieving the sense, as a due attendance to the metre ; for a
‘ redundant

Arb. Oh, that thy name
 Were great as mine! 'would I had paid my wealth
 It were as great, as I might combat thee!
 I would, through all the regions habitable,
 Search thee, and, having found thee, wi' my sword
 Drive thee about the world, 'till I had met
 Some place that yet man's curiosity
 Hath miss'd of: There, there would I strike thee dead:
 Forgotten of mankind, such funeral rites
 As beasts would give thee, thou shouldst have.

Bes. The king rages extremely; shall we sink away?
 He'll strike us.

2 Gent. Content.

Arb. There I would make you know, 'twas this
 sole arm.

I grant, you were my instruments, and did
 As I commanded you; but 'twas this arm
 Mov'd you like wheels; it mov'd you as it pleas'd.

' redundant syllable having crept into the former reading, one may
 ' easily see that it most probably was in the words; *I defie*, that be-
 ' ing evidently a corruption. The word, therefore, that I have hit
 ' upon, gives the full idea required; and suppose, *defie*, to have been
 ' written with a final *y* instead of *ie*, it drops only one vowel, and
 ' changes an *f* into an *l*.'

As the measure used by our Authors, like that of all the other old
 dramatic writers, is often very licentious, and as, in the passionate
 starts of Arbaces, we find it frequently disregarded, we cannot, in
 the present case, admit the deviation from poetry to be a proof of
 error in the words; especially as they are not repugnant to sense.
 It is probable our Authors intended Arbaces (in that unconnected
 mode so frequent in the character) to exclaim, '*I am grown to balk*,'
i. e. 'I am become a man who is to be disappointed, disregarded, in
 ' every command.' '*But I defy*——' when he interrupts himself
 by repeating his command for some one to speak to him. As, how-
 ever, there seems a harshness in the expression, '*I am grown to balk*,'
 we have adopted Mr. Seward's word *talk*, which conveys as forcible
 a meaning by itself, as when accompanied with '*but idly*.' The
 alteration of the subsequent words to '*idly*,' (though the conjecture
 is ingenious) we think, departs too much from the old copies to be
 admitted; particularly, as the preservation of them greatly heightens
 the picture drawn of Arbaces, and paints the workings of ungovern-
 able pride much more nervously than is done by the complaint, '*I*
 '*am grown to talk but idly*.'

Whither

206 A KING AND NO KING.

Whither slip you now ? What, ⁸ are you too good
To wait on me ? (*Puffe.*) I had need have temper,
That rule such people : I have nothing left
At my own choice ! I would I might be private :
Mean men enjoy themselves ; but 'tis our curse
To have a tumult, that, out of their loves,
Will wait on us, whether we will or no.
Go, get you gone ! Why, here they stand like death :
My words move nothing.

¹ *Gent.* Must we go ?

Bes. I know not.

Arb. I pray you, leave me, Sirs. I'm proud of
this, [*Exeunt all but Arb. and Mar.*
That you will be intreated from my fight.
Why, now they leave me all. Mardonius !

Mar. Sir.

Arb. Will you leave me quite alone ? Methinks,
Civility should teach you more than this,
If I were but your friend. Stay here, and wait.

Mar. Sir, shall I speak ?

Arb. Why, you would now think much

⁸ *Are you too good, &c.]* In the old editions, this passage stands,
literally, as follows :

———— are you too good

To wait on me ? (*puffe,*) I had need have temper, &c.

But Mr. Theobald makes the word *puffe* a part of the text, and reads,
also literally, thus :

———— are you too good

To wait on me, *Puffe* ? I had need have temper, &c.

From the old mode of printing this word, we are inclined to suppose,
that it was meant as a direction to the performer of the character of
Arbaces, to shew signs of strong agitation from passion and pride :
And though it may be urged, that directions to performers are not
common in old plays ; yet as, whenever they were inserted, it was in
italics ; and as, besides, we find the word between *parentheses*, and
after the point of *interrogation*, we cannot help adhering to that
opinion. A gentleman of acknowledged abilities has doubted, whe-
ther Arbaces might not mean to call Bessus *Puffe* ; but as the king is
not in a merry mood, and the *gentlemen* as well as *Bessus* are *slipping*
away, we have left the word in the same situation we found it ;
thinking it improper to *advance* it into the text, and there (like the
easy Mr. Theobald, without submitting it to the Reader's election)
leave it, *unnoticed*.

To

To be denied; but I can scarce intreat
What I would have. Do, speak.

Mar. But will you hear me out?

Arb. With me you article, to talk thus: Well,
I will hear you out.

Mar. Sir, that I have ever lov'd you, my sword
hath spoken for me; that I do, if it be doubted, I
dare call an oath, a great one, to my witness; and
were you not my king, from amongst men, I should
have chose you out, to love above the rest: Nor can
this challenge thanks; for my own sake I should have
done it, because I would have lov'd the most deserv-
ing man; for so you are.

Arb. Alas, Mardonius, rise! you shall not kneel:
We all are foldiers, and all venture lives;
And where there is no diff'rence in mens' worths,
Titles are jests. Who can outvalue thee?
Mardonius, thou hast lov'd me, and hast wrong;
Thy love is not rewarded; but, believe
It shall be better. More than friend in arms,
My father, and my tutor, good Mardonius!

Mar. Sir, you did promise you would hear me out.

Arb. And so I will: Speak freely, for from thee
Nothing can come, but worthy things and true.

Mar. Though you have all this worth, you hold
some qualities that do eclipse your virtues.

Arb. Eclipse my virtues?

Mar. Yes; your passions; which are so manifold,
that they appear even in this: When I commend
you, you hug me for that truth; but when I speak
your faults, you make a start, and fly the hear-
ing⁹: But——

Arb.

⁹ *And fly the bearing* but.] This particle seems to have no right
to stand here; we must, to make sense, substitute *out* in its place.

Mr. Symphon.

And so I had corrected the passage long ago.

Mr. Theobald.

There is a poverty in this language, '*And fly the bearing out*,'
which the greatest poetical adversity could not have reduced our Au-
thors to. The three first editions guide us to their true meaning:

Yox

208 A KING AND NO KING.

Arb. When you commend me? Oh, that I should live

To need such commendations! If my deeds
Blew not my praise themselves about the earth,
I were most wretched! Spare your idle praise:
If thou didst mean to flatter, and shouldst utter
Words in my praise, that thou thought'st impudence,
My deeds should make 'em modest. When you praise,
I hug you? 'Tis so false, that, wert thou worthy,
Thou shouldst receive a death, a glorious death,
From me! But thou shalt understand thy lyes;
For, shouldst thou praise me into Heav'n, and there
Leave me inthron'd, I would despise thee then
As much as now, which is as much as dust,
Because I see thy envy.

Mar. However you will use me after, yet for your own promise sake, hear me the rest.

Arb. I will, and after call unto the winds;
For they shall lend as large an ear as I
To what you utter. Speak!

Mar. Would you but leave these hasty tempers,
which I do not say take from you all your worth¹⁰,
but darken it, then you will shine indeed.

Arb. Well.

Mar. Yet I would have you keep some passions,
lest men should take you for a god, your virtues are such.

Arb. Why, now you flatter.

Mar. I never understood the word. Were you no king, and free from these moods, should I chuse a companion for wit and pleasure, it should be you;

You make a start, and fly the hearing: but
which punctuation plainly shews an intended interruption from Arbaces to Mardonius.

¹⁰ *which I do not say take from you all your worth, but darken 'em]*
Worth being a substantive of the singular number, we must certainly read it, instead of 'em.

Mr. Sympson.

Or, perhaps, the Poets wrote *worths*, and the final *s* has been lost at the press.

or

or for honesty to interchange my bosom with, it should be you; or wisdom to give me counsel, I would pick out you; or valour to defend my reputation, still I should find you out; for you are fit to fight for all the world, if it could come in question. Now I have spoke: Consider to yourself; find out a use; if so, then what shall fall to me is not material.

Arb. Is not material? more than ten such lives
As mine, Mardonius! It was nobly said;
Thou hast spoke truth, and boldly such a truth
As might offend another. I have been
Too passionate and idle; thou shalt see
A swift amendment. But I want those parts
You praise me for: I fight for all the world!
Give thee a sword, and thou wilt go as far
Beyond me, as thou art beyond in years;
I know thou dar'st and wilt. It troubles me
That I should use so rough a phrase to thee:
Impute it to my folly, what thou wilt,
So thou wilt pardon me. That thou and I
Should differ thus!

Mar. Why, 'tis no matter, Sir.

Arb. Faith, but it is: But thou dost ever take
All things I do thus patiently; for which
I never can requite thee, but with love;
And that thou shalt be sure of. Thou and I
Have not been merry lately: Prithee tell me,
Where hadst thou that same jewel in thine ear?

Mar. Why, at the taking of a town.

Arb. A wench, upon my life, a wench, Mardonius,
gave thee that jewel.

Mar. Wench! They respect not me; I'm old and
rough, and every limb about me, but that which
should, grows stiffer. I' those busineses, I may
swear I am truly honest; for I pay justly for what I
take, and would be glad to be at a certainty.

Arb. Why, do the wenches encroach upon thee?

Mar. Ay, by this light, do they.

Arb. Didst thou sit at an old rent with 'em?

210 A KING AND NO KING.

Mar. Yes, faith.

Arb. And do they improve themselves?

Mar. Ay, ten shillings to me, every new young fellow they come acquainted with.

Arb. How canst live on't?

Mar. Why, I think, I must petition to you.

Arb. Thou shalt take them up at my price.

Enter two gentlemen, and Bessus.

Mar. Your price?

Arb. Ay, at the king's price.

Mar. That may be more than I'm worth.

2 Gent. Is he not merry now?

1 Gent. I think not.

Bes. He is, he is: We'll shew ourselves.

Arb. Bessus! I thought you had been in Iberia by this; I bad you haste; Gobrias will want entertainment for me.

Bes. An please your majesty, I have a suit.

Arb. Is't not lousy, Bessus? what is't?

Bes. I am to carry a lady with me.

Arb. Then thou hast two suits.

Bes. And if I can prefer her to the lady Panthea, your majesty's sister, to learn fashions, as her friends term it, it will be worth something to me.

Arb. So many nights' lodgings as 'tis thither; will't not?

Bes. I know not that, Sir; but gold I shall be sure of.

Arb. Why, thou shalt bid her entertain her from me, so thou wilt resolve me one thing.

Bes. If I can.

Arb. Faith, 'tis a very disputable question; and yet, I think, thou canst decide it.

Bes. Your majesty has a good opinion of my understanding.

Arb. I have so good an opinion of it: 'Tis, whether thou be valiant.

Bes. Somebody has traduced me to you: Do you see this sword, Sir?

Arb.

Arb. Yes.

Bes. If I do not make my back-biters eat it to a knife within this week, say I am not valiant.

Enter a Messenger.

Mes. Health to your majesty !

Arb. From Gobrias ?

Mes. Yes, Sir.

Arb. How does he ? is he well ?

Mes. In perfect health.

Arb. Take that for thy good news.

A trustier servant to his prince there lives not,
Than is good Gobrias.

1 Gent. The king starts back.

Mar. His blood goes back as fast.

2 Gent. And now it comes again.

Mar. He alters strangely.

Arb. The hand of Heaven is on me : Be it far
From me to struggle ! If my secret sins
Have pull'd this curse upon me, lend me tears
Enow to wash me white, that I may feel
A child-like innocence within my breast !
Which, once perform'd, oh, give me leave to stand
As fix'd as constancy herself ; my eyes
Set here unmov'd, regardless of the world,
Though thousand miseries encompass me !

Mar. This is strange ! Sir, how do you ?

Arb. Mardonius ! my mother——

Mar. Is she dead ?

Arb. Alas, she's not so happy ! Thou dost know
How she hath labour'd, since my father died,
To take by treason hence this loathed life,
That would but be to serve her. I have pardon'd,
And pardon'd, and by that have made her fit
To practise new sins, not repent the old.
She now had hir'd a slave to come from thence,
And strike me here ; whom Gobrias, sifting out,
Took, and condemn'd, and executed there.
The careful'st servant ! Heav'n, let me but live

To pay that man ! Nature is poor to me,
That will not let me have as many deaths
As are the times that he hath sav'd my life,
That I might die 'em over all for him.

Mar. Sir, let her bear her sins on her own head ;
Vex not yourself.

Arb. What will the world
Conceive of me ? with what unnatural sins
Will they suppose me loaden, when my life
Is fought by her, that gave it to the world ?
But yet he writes me comfort here : My sister,
He says, is grown in beauty and in grace ;
In all the innocent virtues that become
A tender spotless maid : She stains her cheeks
With mourning tears, to purge her mother's ill ;
And 'mongst that sacred dew she mingles pray'rs,
Her pure oblations, for my safe return.
If I have lost the duty of a son ;
If any pomp or vanity of state
Made me forget my natural offices ;
Nay, further, if I have not every night
Expostulated with my wand'ring thoughts,
If aught unto my parent they have err'd,
And call'd 'em back ; do you " direct her arm
Unto this foul dissembling heart of mine.
But if I have been just to her, send out
Your pow'r to compass me, and hold me safe
From searching treason ; I will use no means
But prayer : For, rather suffer me to see
From mine own veins issue a deadly flood,
Than wash my danger off with mother's blood.

Mar. I never saw such sudden extremities. [*Exeunt.*]

¹¹ ——— Do you direct her arm

Unto this foul dissembling heart of mine.] Who is to direct her arm ? The gods, I suppose, must be meant ; but they are neither invoked, nor mentioned. This is a bold *ellipsis* ; but yet not infrequent with our Poets. *Mr. Symphon.*

These *ellipses* are certainly very allowable in dramatic writings, as the action of the performer gives full information whom he addresses.

Enter

Enter Tigranes and Spaconia.

Tigr. Why, wilt thou have me die, Spaconia?
What should I do?

Spa. Nay, let me stay alone;
And when you see Armenia again,
You shall behold a tomb more worth than I.
Some friend, that ever lov'd me or my cause,
Will build me something to distinguish me
From other women; many a weeping verse
He will lay on, and much lament those maids
That plac'd their loves unfortunately high,
As I have done, where they can never reach.
But why should you go to Iberia?

Tigr. Alas, that thou wilt ask me! Ask the man
That rages in a fever, why he lies
Distemper'd there, when all the other youths
Are courting o'er the meadows with their loves?
Can I resist it? am I not a slave
To him that conquer'd me?

Spa. That conquer'd thee,
Tigranes! He has won but half of thee,
Thy body; but thy mind may be as free
As his: His will did never combat thine,
And take it prisoner.

Tigr. But if he by force
Convey my body hence, what helps it me,
Or thee, to be unwilling?

Spa. Oh, Tigranes!
I know you are to see a lady there;
To see, and like, I fear: Perhaps, the hope
Of her makes you forget me, ere we part.
Be happier than you know to wish! farewell!

Tigr. Spaconia, stay, and hear me what I say.
In short, destruction meet me that I may
See it, and not avoid it, when I leave
To be thy faithful lover! Part with me
Thou shalt not; there are none that know our love;
And I have given gold unto a captain,

214 A KING AND NO KING.

That goes unto Iberia from the king,
That he will place a lady of our land
With the king's sister that is offer'd me;
Thither shall you, and, being once got in,
Persuade her, by what subtle means you can,
To be as backward in her love as I.

Spa. Can you imagine that a longing maid,
When she beholds you, can be pull'd away
With words from loving you?

Tigr. Dispraise my health,
My honesty, and tell her I am jealous.

Spa. Why, I had rather lose you: Can my heart
Consent to let my tongue throw out such words?
And I, that ever yet spoke what I thought,
Shall find it such a thing at first to lye!

Tigr. Yet, do thy best.

Enter Bessus.

Bes. What, is your majesty ready?

Tigr. There is the lady, captain.

Bes. Sweet lady, by your leave. I could wish myself
more full of courtship for your fair sake.

Spa. Sir, I shall feel no want of that.

Bes. Lady, you must haste; I have receiv'd new
letters from the king, that require more haste than I
expected; he will follow me suddenly himself; and
begins to call for your majesty already.

Tigr. He shall not do so long.

Bes. Sweet lady, shall I call you my Charge here-
after?

Spa. I will not take upon me to govern your tongue,
Sir: You shall call me what you please.

A C T

216 A KING AND NO KING.

Ara. You talk to me, as having got a time
Fit for your purpose; but, you know, I know
You speak not what you think.

Pan. I would my heart
Were stone, before my softness should be urg'd
Against my mother! A more troubled thought
No virgin bears about! Should I excuse
My mother's fault, I should set light a life,
In losing which a brother and a king
Were taken from me: If I seek to save
That life so lov'd, I lose another life,
That gave me being; I shall lose a mother;
A word of such a sound in a child's ear,
That it strikes reverence through it. May the will
Of Heav'n be done, and if one needs must fall,
Take a poor virgin's life to answer all!

Ara. But, Gobrias, let us talk. You know, this fault
Is not in me as in another mother.

Gob. I know it is not.

Ara. Yet you make it so.

Gob. Why, is not all that's past beyond your help?

Ara. I know it is.

Gob. Nay, should you publish it
Before the world, think you 'twould be believ'd?

Ara. I know, it would not.

Gob. Nay, should I join wi' you,
Should we not both be torn¹³, and yet both die
Uncredited?

Ara.

¹³ *Nay, should I join with you, should we not both be torn, and yet both die uncredited?*] I can't think, this word came from the Poets, or was designed by them to stand for *tortured*; neither do I know how to apply an healing hand to the text, unless we transpose and read thus,

————— *should we both be sworn,
Yet should not we both die uncredited.*

Mr. Symphon.

My friend does not seem much to like his conjecture: But as the passage is certainly corrupted without it, and as it retrieves plain sense, I have ventured to insert it; and, I am verily persuaded, it will not do him any discredit.

Mr. Theobald.

It is plain, Mr. Symphon had at first hit upon the Poets' meaning,
however

Ara. I think we should.

Gob. Why, then,

Take you such violent courses ? As for me,
I do but right in saving of the king
From all your plots.

Ara. The king !

Gob. I bad you rest

With patience, and a time would come for me
To reconcile all to your own content :
But, by this way, you take away my pow'r.
And what was done, unknown, was not by me,
But you ; your urging. Being done,
I must preserve my own¹⁴ ; but time may bring
All this to light, and happily for all.

Ara. Accursed be this over-curious brain,
That gave that plot a birth ! Accurs'd this womb,
That after did conceive, to my disgrace !

Bac. My lord-protector, they say, there are divers
letters come from Armenia, that Beffus has done good
service, and brought again a day by his particular
valour : Receiv'd you any to that effect ?

Gob. Yes ; 'tis most certain.

Bac. I'm sorry for't ; not that the day was won, but
that 'twas won by him. We held him here a coward :
He did me wrong once, at which I laugh'd, and so
did all the world ; for nor I, nor any other, held him
worth my sword.

however widely he afterwards departed from it. Gobrias means,
' Though we should be rack'd, *torn* even to death, we should die
' uncredited.' There is a weakness of expression, a poverty of ima-
gination, in the passage when thus altered, which, we think, our
Authors never betray.—Had the Editors of 1750 adhered to the rule
which they often mention, of making the poetry a test for the words,
they would not have altered nor transposed a syllable. But, by some
strange mishap, though the elder copies of this Play give us well-
divided metre, this part of the scene, in their edition, is most strangely
confused ; part of it being printed as prose, and part ranged in such
lines as we believe never before appeared under the name of poetry.

¹⁴ *I must preserve my own.] i. e. Must protect my son, Arbaces,
against your endeavours to destroy him.*

Enter

Enter Bessus and Spaconia.

Bes. Health to my lord-protector! From the king these letters; and to your grace, madam, these.

Gob. How does his majesty?

Bes. As well as conquest, by his own means and his valiant commanders, can make him: Your letters will tell you all.

Pan. I will not open mine, till I do know My brother's health: Good captain, is he well?

Bes. As the rest of us that fought are.

Pan. But how's that? is he hurt?

Bes. He's a strange foldier that gets not a knock.

Pan. I do not ask how strange that foldier is That gets no hurt, but whether he have one.

Bes. He had divers.

Pan. And is he well again?

Bes. Well again, an't please your grace. Why, I was run twice through the body, and shot i' th' head with a cross-arrow, and yet am well again.

Pan. I do not care how thou do'st: Is he well?

Bes. Not care how I do? Let a man, out of the mightiness of his spirit, fructify foreign countries with his blood, for the good of his own, and thus he shall be answered. Why, I may live to relieve, with spear and shield, such a lady as you distressed.

Pan. Why, I will care: I'm glad that thou art well; I prithee, is he so?

Gob. The king is well, and will be here to-morrow.

Pan. My prayer is heard. Now will I open mine.

Gob. Bacurius, I must ease you of your charge. Madam, the wonted mercy of the king, That overtakes your faults, has met with this, And struck it out; he has forgiven you freely. Your own will is your law; be where you please.

Ara. I thank him.

Gob. You will be ready to wait upon his majesty to-morrow?

Ara. I will.

[*Exit Arane.*

Bac.

A KING AND NO KING. 219

Bac. Madam, be wise hereafter. I am glad I have lost this office.

Gob. Good captain Bessus, tell us the discourse Betwixt Tigranes and our king, and how We got the victory.

Pan. I prithee do;
And if my brother were in any danger,
Let not thy tale make him abide there long,
Before thou bring him off; for all that while
My heart will beat.

Bes. Madam, let what will beat, I must tell the truth, and thus it was: They fought single in lifts, but one to one. As for my own part, I was dangerously hurt but three days before; else, perhaps, we had been two to two; I cannot tell, some thought, we had. And the occasion of my hurt was this; the enemy had made trenches——

Gob. Captain, without the manner of your hurt be much material to this business, we'll hear't some other time.

Pan. I prithee, leave it, and go on with my brother.

Bes. I will; but 'twould be worth your hearing. To the lifts they came, and single sword and gauntlet was their fight¹⁵.

Pan.

¹⁵ *To the lifts they came, and single sword and gauntlet was their fight.*] I know, in all ages of the world, that soldiers had a steel glove, or *gantlet*, to defend the back of their hands from the cuts of a broad sword; but, surely, this is an odd word for a weapon of war; and for two combatants to fight with their gloves on, was no great sign of courage or dexterity. A *target*, (as I suspect, the original word to have been) gracefully and artfully managed, was a defence for the whole body.

So the words are again joined in the *Mad Lover*.

——— *This fellow,*

With all his frights about him and his furies,

His larums, and his lances, swords, and targets, &c.

And so we find in the *Coronation*.

Enter Seleucus and Arcadius at several doors; their pages before them, bearing their targets.

Mr. Symphon.

As this alteration is countenanced by none of the old copies, so the reason for which it is made will hardly be deemed a sufficient one, when

Pan. Alas!

Bef. Without the lists there stood some dozen captains of either side mingled, all which were sworn, and one of those was I: And 'twas my chance to stand next a captain o' th' enemies' side, call'd Tiribasus; valiant, they said, he was. Whilst these two kings were stretching themselves, this Tiribasus cast something a scornful look on me, and ask'd me, whom I thought would overcome? I smil'd, and told him, if he would fight with me, he should perceive by the event of that whose king would win. Something he answer'd, and a scuffle was like to grow, when one Zipetus offered to help him: I——

Pan. All this is of thyself: I pray thee, Bessus, Tell something of my brother; did he nothing?

Bef. Why, yes; I'll tell your grace. They were not to fight till the word given; which, for my own part, by my troth, I confess, I was not to give.

Pan. See, for his own part!

Bac. I fear, yet, this fellow's abus'd with a good report.

Bef. But I——

Pan. Still of himself!

Bef. Cry'd, 'Give the word;' when, as some of them say, Tigranes was stooping; but the word was not given then; yet one Cosroes, of the enemies' part, held up his finger to me, which is as much, with us martialists, as, 'I will fight with you:' I said not a word, nor made sign during the combat; but that once done——

Pan. He slips o'er all the fight.

Bef. I call'd him to me; Cosroes, said I——

when it is understood, that every combatant was provided with a gauntlet when he fought. In a book entitled, 'Honor Military and Civill, contained in foure Bookes. By W. Segar,' *fo.* 1602, *p.* 130, is the following passage: 'He that loseth his gauntlet in fight, is more to be blamed than he who is disarmed of his poulderon. For the gauntlet armeth the hand, without which member no fight can be performed; and therefore that part of the armor is commonly sent in signe of defiance.'

R.

Pan.

Pan. I will hear no more.

Bef. No, no, I lye.

Bac. I dare be sworn thou dost.

Bef. Captain, said I; so it was.

Pan. I tell thee, I will hear no further.

Bef. No? Your grace will wish you had.

Pan. I will not wish it. What, is this the lady
My brother writes to me to take?

Bef. An't please your grace, this is she. Charge,
will you come near the princess?

Pan. You're welcome from your country; and
this land

Shall shew unto you all the kindneffes
That I can make it. What's your name?

Spa. Thalestris.

Pan. You're very welcome: You have got a letter
To put you to me that has power enough
To place mine enemy here; then much more you,
That are so far from being so to me,
That you ne'er saw me.

Bef. Madam, I dare pass my word for her truth.

Spa. My truth?

Pan. Why, captain, do you think I am afraid
she'll steal?

Bef. I cannot tell; servants are slippery; but I
dare give my word for her: And for honesty, she
came along with me, and many favours she did me
by the way; but, by this light, none but what she
might do with modesty, to a man of my rank.

Pan. Why, captain, here's nobody thinks other-
wise.

Bef. Nay, if you should, your grace may think
your pleasure; but I am sure I brought her from
Armenia, and in all that way, if ever I touch'd any
bare of her above her knee, I pray God I may sink
where I stand.

Spa. Above my knee?

Bef. No, you know I did not; and if any man will
say I did, this sword shall answer. Nay, I'll defend
the

222 A KING AND NO KING.

the reputation of my Charge, whilst I live. Your grace shall understand, I am secret in these businesses, and know how to defend a lady's honour.

Spa. I hope your grace knows him so well already, I shall not need to tell you he's vain and foolish.

Bef. Ay, you may call me what you please, but I'll defend your good name against the world. And so I take my leave of your grace, and of you, my lord-protector. I am likewise glad to see your lordship well.

Bac. Oh, captain Bessus, I thank you. I would speak with you anon.

Bef. When you please, I will attend your lordship.
[Exit *Bef.*

Bac. Madam, I'll take my leave too.

Pan. Good Bacurius! [Exit *Bac.*

Gob. Madam, what writes his majesty to you?

Pan. Oh, my lord,
The kindest words! I'll keep 'em while I live,
Here in my bosom; there's no art in 'em;
They lie disorder'd in this paper, just
As hearty nature speaks 'em.

Gob. And to me
He writes, what tears of joy he shed, to hear
How you were grown in every virtuous way;
And yields all thanks to me, for that dear care
Which I was bound to have in training you.
There is no prince's living that enjoys
A brother of that worth.

Pan. My lord, no maid
Longs more for any thing, and feels more heat
And cold within her breast, than I do now,
In hope to see him.

Gob. Yet I wonder much
At this: He writes, he brings along with him
A husband for you, that same captive prince;
And if he love you, as he makes a shew,
He will allow you freedom in a choice.

Pan. And so he will, my lord, I warrant you;

He

A KING AND NO KING. 223

He will but offer, and give me the power
To take or leave.

Gob. Trust me, were I a lady,
I could not like that man were bargain'd with,
Before I chose him.

Pan. But I am not built
On such wild humours; if I find him worthy,
He is not less because he's offered.

Spa. 'Tis true he is not; 'would, he would seem
less!

Gob. I think there is no lady can affect
Another prince, your brother standing by;
He doth eclipse mens' virtues so with his.

Spa. I know a lady may, and, more I fear,
Another lady will.

Pan. 'Would I might see him!

Gob. Why so you shall. My busineses are great:
I will attend you when it is his pleasure to see you.

Pan. I thank you, good my lord.

Gob. You will be ready, madam?

Pan. Yes. [Exit Gob.]

Spa. I do beseech you, madam, send away
Your other women, and receive from me
A few sad words, which, set against your joys,
May make 'em shine the more.

Pan. Sirs, leave me all. [Exeunt women.]

Spa. I kneel a stranger here, to beg a thing
Unfit for me to ask, and you to grant.
'Tis such another strange ill-laid request,
As if a beggar should intreat a king
To leave his sceptre and his throne to him,
And take his rags to wander o'er the world,
Hungry and cold.

Pan. That were a strange request.

Spa. As ill is mine.

Pan. Then do not utter it.

Spa. Alas, 'tis of that nature, that it must
Be utter'd, ay, and granted, or I die!
I am asham'd to speak it; but where life

Lies

224 A KING AND NO KING.

Lies at the stake, I cannot think her woman,
That will not talk something unreasonably
To hazard saving of it¹⁶. I shall seem
A strange petitioner, that wish all ill
To them I beg of, ere they give me aught;
Yet so I must: I would you were not fair,
Nor wise, for in your ill consists my good:
If you were foolish, you would hear my prayer;
If foul, you had not power to hinder me;
He would not love you.

Pan. What's the meaning of it?

Spa. Nay, my request is more without the bounds
Of reason yet; for 'tis not in the pow'r
Of you to do, what I would have you grant.

Pan. Why, then, 'tis idle. Prithee, speak it out.

Spa. Your brother brings a prince into this land,
Of such a noble shape, so sweet a grace,
So full of worth withal, that every maid
That looks upon him gives away herself
To him for ever; and for you to have
He brings him: And so mad is my demand,
That I desire you not to have this man,
This excellent man; for whom you needs must die,
If you should miss him. I do now expect
You should laugh at me.

Pan. Trust me, I could weep
Rather; for I have found in all thy words
A strange disjointed sorrow.

Spa. 'Tis by me
His own desire so, that you would not love him.

Pan. His own desire! Why, credit me, Thalestris,

¹⁶

— but where life

*Lies at the stake, I cannot think her woman
That will not take something unreasonably,
To hazard saving of it.]*

But what was the woman to take
in this case? I think, I may venture to say, I have restored the original word of the Poets: My emendation is confirmed by what she says three lines above.

*Alas! 'Tis of that nature, that it must
Be utter'd.*

Mr. Theobald.

I am

I am no common wooer: If he shall woo me,
His worth may be such, that I dare not swear
I will not love him; but if he will stay
To have me woo him, I will promise thee
He may keep all his graces to himself,
And fear no ravishing from me.

Spa. 'Tis yet

His own desire; but when he sees your face,
I fear, it will not be; therefore I charge you,
As you have pity, stop those tender ears
From his enchanting voice; close up those eyes,
That you may neither catch a dart from him,
Nor he from you. I charge you, as you hope
To live in quiet; for when I am dead,
For certain I will walk to visit him,
If he break promise with me: For as fast
As oaths, without a formal ceremony,
Can make me, I am to him.

Pan. Then be fearless;

For if he were a thing 'twixt God and man,
I could gaze on him, if I knew it sin
To love him, without passion¹⁷. Dry your eyes;
I swear, you shall enjoy him still for me;
I will not hinder you. But I perceive,
You are not what you seem: Rise, rise, Thalestris,
If your right name be so.

Spa. Indeed, it is not:

Spaconia is my name; but I desire
Not to be known to others.

Pan. Why, by me

You shall not; I will never do you wrong;
What good I can, I will: Think not my birth

¹⁷ *For if he were a thing 'twixt god and man,
I could gaze on him, if I knew it sin*

*To love him, without passion:] i. e. If she knew it a sin to fall
in love with him, let him be ever so lovely, she could avoid it. The
confidence with which she speaks this, is extremely natural, to shew
how little we know our own weakness: For she soon after falls in
love with one, whom she took for her own brother. Mr. Seward.*

226 A KING AND NO KING.

Or education such, that I should injure
A stranger virgin. You are welcome hither.
In company you wish to be commanded;
But, when we are alone, I shall be ready
To be your servant.

[*Exeunt.*

Enter three men and a woman.

1 *Man.* Come, come, run, run, run.

2 *Man.* We shall out-go her.

3 *Man.* One were better be hang'd than carry out
women fiddling to these shows.

Wom. Is the king hard by?

1 *Man.* You heard he with the bottles said, he
thought we should come too late. What abundance
of people here is?

Wom. But what had he in those bottles?

3 *Man.* I know not.

2 *Man.* Why, ink, goodman fool.

3 *Man.* Ink, what to do?

1 *Man.* Why, the king, look you, will many
times call for those bottles, and break his mind to his
friends.

Wom. Let's take our places; we shall have no
room else.

2 *Man.* The man told us, he would walk o' foot
through the people.

3 *Man.* Ay, marry, did he.

1 *Man.* Our shops are well look'd-to now.

2 *Man.* 'Slife, yonder's my master, I think.

1 *Man.* No, 'tis not he.

Enter Philip, with two citizens' wives.

1 *Cit.* Lord, how fine the fields be. What sweet
living 'tis in the country!

2 *Cit.* Ay, poor souls, God help 'em, they live as
contentedly as one of us.

1 *Cit.* My husband's cousin would have had me
gone into the country last year. Wert thou ever
there?

2 *Cit.*

A KING AND NO KING. 227

2 *Cit.* Ay, poor souls, I was amongst 'em once.

1 *Cit.* And what kind of creatures are they, for love of God?

2 *Cit.* Very good people, God help 'em.

1 *Cit.* Wilt thou go down with me this summer when I am brought to-bed?

2 *Cit.* Alas, it is no place for us.

1 *Cit.* Why, prithee?

2 *Cit.* Why, you can have nothing there; there's nobody cries brooms.

1 *Cit.* No?

2 *Cit.* No truly, nor milk.

1 *Cit.* Nor milk! how do they?

2 *Cit.* They are fain to milk themselves i' the country.

1 *Cit.* Good lord! But the people there, I think, will be very dutiful to one of us.

2 *Cit.* Ay, God knows will they; and yet they do not greatly care for our husbands.

1 *Cit.* Do they not? alas! i' good faith, I cannot blame them: For we do not greatly care for them ourselves. Philip, I pray, chuse us a place.

Phil. There's the best, forsooth.

1 *Cit.* By your leave, good people, a little.

3 *Man.* What's the matter?

Phi. I pray you, my friend, do not thrust my mistress so; she's with child.

2 *Man.* Let her look to herself then; has she not had thrusting enough yet? If she stay shouldering here, she may, haps, go home with a cake in her belly.

3 *Man.* How now, goodman Squitter-breech! why do you lean on me?

Phil. Because I will.

3 *Man.* Will you, Sir Sauce-box?

1 *Cit.* Look, if one ha' not struck Philip. Come hither, Philip; why did he strike thee?

Phil. For leaning on him.

1 *Cit.* Why didst thou lean on him?

228 A KING AND NO KING.

Phil. I did not think he would have struck me.

1 Cit. As God save me, la, thou'rt as wild as a buck; there's no quarrel, but thou'rt at one end or other on't.

3 Man. It's at the first end then, for he'll ne'er stay the last.

1 Cit. Well, Slip-string, I shall meet with you.

3 Man. When you will.

1 Cit. I'll give a crown to meet with you.

3 Man. At a bawdy-house.

1 Cit. Ay, you're full of your roguery; but if I do meet you, it shall cost me a fall.

Flourish. Enter one running.

4 Man. The king, the king, the king, the king! Now, now, now, now!

Flourish. Enter Arbaces, Tigranes, and Mardonius.

All. God preserve your majesty!

Arb. I thank you all. Now are my joys at full, When I behold you safe, my loving subjects. By you I grow; 'tis your united love That lifts me to this height.

All the account that I can render you
For all the love you have bestow'd on me,
All your expences to maintain my war,
Is but a little word: You will imagine
'Tis slender payment; yet 'tis such a word
As is not to be bought but with your bloods:
'Tis peace!

All. God preserve your majesty!

Arb. Now you may live securely i' your towns,
Your children round about you; you may sit
Under your vines, and make the miseries
Of other kingdoms a discourse for you,
And lend them sorrows. For yourselves, you may
Safely forget there are such things as tears:
And you may all, whose good thoughts I have gain'd,
Hold me unworthy, when I think my life

A sacrifice

A sacrifice too great to keep you thus
In such a calm estate!

All. God bleſs your majeſty!

Arb. See, all good people; I have brought the
man,

Whoſe very name you fear'd, a captive home.
Behold him; 'tis Tigranes! In your hearts
Sing ſongs of gladneſs and deliverance.

1 *Cit.* Out upon him!

2 *Cit.* How he looks.

3 *Wom.* Hang him, hang him!

Mar. Theſe are ſweet people.

Tigr. Sir, you do me wrong,
To render me a ſcorned ſpectacle
To common people.

Arb. It was far from me
To mean it ſo. If I have aught deſerv'd,
My loving ſubjects, let me beg of you
Not to revile this prince, in whom there dwells
All worth, of which the nature of a man
Is capable; valour beyond compare:
The terror of his name has ſtretch'd itſelf
Where-ever there is fun: And yet for you
I fought with him ſingle, and won him too.
I made his valour ſtoop, and brought that name,
Soar'd to ſo unbeliev'd a height, to fall
Beneath mine. This, inspir'd with all your loves,
I did perform; and will, for your content,
Be ever ready for a greater work.

All. The Lord bleſs your majeſty!

Tig. So, he has made me amends now with a ſpeech
in commendation of himſelf: I would not be ſo vain-
glorious.

Arb. If there be any thing in which I may
Do good to any creature here, ſpeak out;
For I muſt leave you: And it troubles me,
That my occasions, for the good of you,
Are ſuch as call me from you: Elſe, my joy
Would be to ſpend my days among you all.

230 A KING AND NO KING.

You shew your loves in these large multitudes
That come to meet me. I will pray for you.
Heav'n prosper you, that you may know old years,
And live to see your childrens children
Sit at your boards with plenty ! When there is
A want of any thing, let it be known
To me, and I will be a father to you.
God keep you all !

[*Flourish. Exeunt kings and their train.*]

All. God blefs your majesty, God blefs your majesty !

1 Man. Come, shall we go ? all's done.

Wom. Ay, for God's sake : I have not made a fire yet.

2 Man. Away, away ! all's done.

3 Man. Content. Farewell, Philip.

1 Cit. Away, you halter-sack, you !

2 Man. Philip will not fight ; he's afraid on's face.

Phil. Ay, marry ; am I afraid of my face ?

3 Man. Thou wouldst be, Philip, if thou saw'st it in a glass ; it looks so like a visor.

[*Exeunt the three men and woman.*]

1 Cit. You'll be hang'd, firrah. Come, Philip, walk before us homewards. Did not his majesty say he had brought us home peas for all our money¹⁸ ?

2 Cit. Yes, marry, did he.

1 Cit. They're the first I heard of this year, by my troth. I long'd for some of 'em. Did he not say, we should have some ?

2 Cit. Yes, and so we shall anon, I warrant you, have every one a peck brought home to our houses.

[*Exeunt.*]

¹⁸ *Did not his majesty say, he had brought us home peas for all our money.*] This ridiculous blunder from the ignorance of the citizen in mistaking *peace* for *peas*, might have an effect, perhaps, (at least of laughter) on the gross audiences of those times ; though I question whether it would not meet with a rebuke from the nicer tastes in ours.

Mr. Theobald.

A C T III.

Enter Arbaces and Gobrias.

Arb. MY sister take it ill?

Gob. Not very ill:

Something unkindly she does take it, Sir,
To have her husband chosen to her hands.

Arb. Why, Gobrias, let her: I must have her know,
My will, and not her own, must govern her.
What, will she marry with some slave at home?

Gob. Oh, she is far from any stubbornness;
You much mistake her; and, no doubt, will like
Where you will have her. But when you behold her,
You will be loth to part with such a jewel.

Arb. To part with her? Why, Gobrias, art thou
mad?

She is my sister.

Gob. Sir, I know she is:
But it were pity to make poor our land,
With such a beauty to enrich another.

Arb. Pish! Will she have him?

Gob. I do hope she will not. [*Aside.*
I think she will, Sir.

Arb. Were she my father, and my mother too,
And all the names for which we think folks friends,
She should be forc'd to have him, when I know
'Tis fit. I will not hear her say, she's loth.

Gob. Heav'n, bring my purpose luckily to pass!
You know 'tis just.—She will not need constraint,
She loves you so.

Arb. How does she love me? Speak.

Gob. She loves you more than people love their
health,
That live by labour; more than I could love

232 A KING AND NO KING.

A man that died for me, if he could live Again.

Arb. She is not like her mother, then.

Gob. Oh, no! When you were in Armenia, I durst not let her know when you were hurt: For at the first, on every little scratch, She kept her chamber, wept, and could not eat, Till you were well; and many times the news Was so long coming, that, before we heard, She was as near her death, as you your health.

Arb. Alas, poor soul! But yet she must be rul'd, I know not how I shall requite her well. I long to see her: Have you sent for her, To tell her I am ready?

Gob. Sir, I have.

Enter 1 gentleman and Tigranes.

1 Gent. Sir, here is the Armenian king.

Arb. He's welcome.

1 Gent. And the queen-mother and the princess wait Without.

Arb. Good Gobrias, bring 'em in. [*Exit Gobrias.* Tigranes, you will think you are arriv'd In a strange land, where mothers cast to poison Their only sons: Think you, you shall be safe?

Tig. Too safe I am, Sir.

Enter Gobrias, Arane, Panthea, Spaconia, Bacurius, Mardonius, Bessus, and two gentlemen.

Ara. As low as this I bow to you¹⁹; and would

As

¹⁹ *As low as this I bow to you, &c.*] Mr. Theobald compares this speech, and Arbaces' reply, to the following passage in Coriolanus, on a similar occasion, 'to which, says he, our Authors might possibly 'have an eye.'

Vol. Ob, stand up blest'd!

*Whilst with no softer cushion than the flint
I kneel before thee; and improperly
Shew duty as mistaken all the while
Between the child and parent.*

Cor.

As low as is my grave, to shew a mind
Thankful for all your mercies.

Arb. Oh, stand up,
And let me kneel ! the light will be ashamed
To see observance done to me by you.

Ara. You are my king.

Arb. You are my mother. Rise !
As far be all your faults from your own soul,
As from my memory ; then you shall be
As white as Innocence herself.

Ara. I came
Only to shew my duty, and acknowledge
My sorrows for my sins : Longer to stay,
Were but to draw eyes more attentively
Upon my shame. That pow'r, that kept you safe
From me, preserve you still !

Arb. Your own desires shall be your guide.

[*Exit Ara.*]

Pan. Now let me die !
Since I have seen my lord the king return
In safety, I have seen all good that life
Can shew me. I have ne'er another wish
For Heav'n to grant ; nor were it fit I should ;
For I am bound to spend my age to come,
In giving thanks that this was granted me.

Gob. Why does not your majesty speak ?

Arb. To whom ?

Gob. To the princess.

Pan. Alas, Sir, I am fearful ! You do look
On me, as if I were some loathed thing,
That you were finding out a way to shun.

Gob. Sir, you should speak to her.

Arb. Ha ?

Cor. What is this ?

*Your knees to me ? to your corrected son ?
Then let the pebbles on the hungry beach
Fillop the stars ; then let the mutinous winds
Strike the proud cedars 'gainst the fiery sun ;
Murth'ring impossibility, to make
What cannot be slight work.*

Pan.

234 A KING AND NO KING.

Pan. I know I am unworthy, yet not ill:
Arm'd with which innocence, here I will kneel
'Till I am one with earth, but I will gain
Some words and kindness from you.

Tigr. Will you speak, Sir?

Arb. Speak! am I what I was?
What art thou, that dost creep into my breast,
And dar'st not see my face? Shew forth thyself.
I feel a pair of fiery wings display'd
Hither, from thence. You shall not tarry there!
Up, and be gone; if thou be'st love, be gone!
Or I will tear thee from my wounded breast,
Pull thy lov'd down away, and with a quill
By this right arm drawn from thy wanton wing,
Write to thy laughing mother i' thy blood²⁰,
That you are pow'rs bely'd, and all your darts
Are to be blown away, by men resolv'd,
Like dust. I know thou fear'st my words; away!

Tigr. Oh, misery! why should he be so slow?
There can no falsehood come of loving her.
Though I have given my faith, she is a thing
Both to be lov'd and serv'd beyond my faith.
I would, he would present me to her quickly.

Pan. Will you not speak at all? Are you so far
From kind words? Yet, to save my modesty,
That must talk till you answer, do not stand
As you were dumb; say something, though it be
Poison'd with anger that may strike me dead.

Mar. Have you no life at all? For manhood sake,
Let her not kneel, and talk neglected thus.
A tree would find a tongue to answer her,
Did she but give it such a lov'd respect.

Arb. You mean this lady. Lift her from the earth:
Why do you let her kneel so long? Alas!
Madam, your beauty uses to command,
And not to beg. What is your suit to me?
It shall be granted; yet the time is short,

²⁰ *Thy laughing mother.*] The old poets, both Greek and Latin, as Mr. Seward observes, apply this epithet to Venus.

And

And my affairs are great. But where's my sister?
I bade, she should be brought.

Mar. What, is he mad?

Arb. Gobrias, where is she?

Gob. Sir!

Arb. Where is she, man?

Gob. Who, Sir?

Arb. Who? hast thou forgot my sister?

Gob. Your sister, Sir?

Arb. Your sister, Sir? Some one that hath a wit,
Answer, where is she?

Gob. Do you not see her there?

Arb. Where?

Gob. There.

Arb. There? where?

Mar. 'Slight, there! are you blind?

Arb. Which do you mean? That little one?

Gob. No, Sir.

Arb. No, Sir? Why, do you mock me? I can see
No other here, but that petitioning lady.

Gob. That's she.

Arb. Away!

Gob. Sir, it is she.

Arb. 'Tis false,

Gob. Is it?

Arb. As Hell! By Heav'n, as false as Hell!
My sister!—Is she dead? If it be so,
Speak boldly to me; for I am a man,
And dare not quarrel with Divinity;
And do not think to cozen me with this.
I see, you all are mute and stand amaz'd,
Fearful to answer me. It is too true;
A decreed instant cuts off ev'ry life,
For which to mourn, is to repine. She died
A virgin though, more innocent than sleep,
As clear as her own eyes; and blessedness
Eternal waits upon her where she is.
I know, she could not make a wish to change
Her state for new; and you shall see me bear

My

236 A KING AND NO KING.

My crosses like a man. We all must die,
And she hath taught us how.

Gob. Do not mistake,
And vex yourself for nothing; for her death
Is a long life off yet, I hope. 'Tis she;
And if my speech deserve not faith, lay death
Upon me, and my latest words shall force
A credit from you.

Arb. Which, good Gobrias?
That lady, dost thou mean?

Gob. That lady, Sir:
She is your sister; and she is your sister
That loves you so; 'tis she for whom I weep,
To see you use her thus.

Arb. It cannot be.

Tigr. Pish! this is tedious:
I cannot hold; I must present myself.
And yet the sight of my Spaconia
Touches me, as a sudden thunder-clap
Does one that is about to sin.

Arb. Away!

No more of this! Here I pronounce him traitor,
The direct plotter of my death, that names
Or thinks her for my sister: 'Tis a lye,
The most malicious of the world, invented
To mad your king. He that will say so next,
Let him draw out his sword and sheath it here;
It is a sin fully as pardonable.

She is no kin to me, nor shall she be:
If she were ever, I create her none.
And which of you can question this? My pow'r
Is like the sea, that is to be obey'd,
And not disputed with. I have decreed her
As far from having part of blood with me,
As the naked Indians. Come and answer me,
He that is boldest now: Is that my sister?

Mar. Oh, this is fine!

Bes. No, marry, she is not, an't please your majesty.
I never thought she was; she's nothing like you.

Arb.

Arb. No; 'tis true, she is not.

Mar. Thou shouldst be hang'd.

Pan. Sir, I will speak but once: By the same pow'r
You make my blood a stranger unto yours,
You may command me dead; and so much love
A stranger may importune; pray you, do.
If this request appear too much to grant,
Adopt me of some other family,
By your unquestion'd word; else I shall live
Like sinful issues, that are left in streets
By their regardless mothers, and no name
Will be found for me.

Arb. I will hear no more.
Why should there be such music in a voice,
And sin for me to hear it? All the world
May take delight in this²¹; and 'tis damnation
For me to do so. You are fair, and wise,
And virtuous, I think; and he is bless'd
That is so near you as a brother is;
But you are nought to me but a disease;
Continual torment without hope of ease.
Such an ungodly sickness I have got,
That he, that undertakes my cure, must first
O'erthrow divinity, all moral laws,
And leave mankind as unconfin'd as beasts;
Allowing 'em to do all actions,
As freely as they drink when they desire.
Let me not hear you speak again; yet so
I shall but languish for the want of that,
The having which would kill me. No man here
Offer to speak for her; for I consider

²¹ ——— and 'tis damnation

For me to do so.] To make sense and true reasoning, the conjunction *and* must be changed into the discretive particle *yet*. The king means, all the world, besides himself, may take delight in the music of her tongue; but it would be damnation in him to do so.

Mr. Theobald.

We have followed the old reading, which we think easy and familiar. *And* often stands for *and yet*; and clearly conveys that sense in the passage before us.

238 A KING AND NO KING.

As much as you can say; I will not toil
My body and my mind too; rest thou there;
Here's one within will labour for you both.

Pan. I would I were past speaking.

Gob. Fear not, madam;
The king will alter: 'Tis some sudden rage,
And you shall see it end some other way.

Pan. Pray Heav'n it do!

Tig. Though she to whom I swore be here, I cannot
Stifle my passion longer; if my father
Should rise again, disquieted with this,
And charge me to forbear, yet it would out.
Madam, a stranger, and a pris'ner, begs
To be bid welcome.

Pan. You are welcome, Sir,
I think; but if you be not, 'tis past me
To make you so; for I am here a stranger
Greater than you: We know from whence you come;
But I appear a lost thing, and by whom
Is yet uncertain; found here i' the court,
And only suffer'd to walk up and down,
As one not worth the owning.

Spa. Oh, I fear
Tigranes will be caught; he looks, methinks,
As he would change his eyes with her. Some help
There is above for me, I hope!

Tigr. Why do you turn away, and weep so fast,
And utter things that mis-become your looks?
Can you want owning?

Spa. Oh, 'tis certain so.

Tigr. Acknowledge yourself mine.

Arb. How now?

Tigr. And then see if you want an owner.

Arb. They are talking!

Tigr. Nations shall own you for their queen.

Arb. Tigranes! art not thou my prisoner?

Tigr. I am.

Arb. And who is this?

Tigr. She is your sister.

Arb.

Arb. She is so.

Mar. Is she so again? that's well.

Arb. And how, then, dare you offer to change words with her?

Tigr. Dare do it! Why, you brought me hither, Sir,

To that intent.

Arb. Perhaps, I told you so:
If I had sworn it, had you so much folly
To credit it? The least word that she speaks
Is worth a life. Rule your disorder'd tongue,
Or I will temper it!

Spa. Blest be that breath!

Tigr. Temper my tongue! Such incivilities
As these no barbarous people ever knew;
You break the laws of nature, and of nations;
You talk to me as if I were a prisoner
For theft. My tongue be temper'd? I must speak,
If thunder check me, and I will.

Arb. You will?

Spa. Alas, my fortune!

Tigr. Do not fear his frown.

Dear madam, hear me.

Arb. Fear not my frown? But that 'twere base
in me

To fight with one I know I can o'ercome,
Again thou shouldst be conquered by me.

Mar. He has one ransom with him already; methinks, 'twere good to fight double or quit.

Arb. Away with him to prison! Now, Sir, see
If my frown be regardless. Why delay you?
Seize him, Bacurius! You shall know my word
Sweeps like a wind; and all it grapples with
Are as the chaff before it.

Tigr. Touch me not.

Arb. Help there!

Tigr. Away!

1 *Gent.* It is in vain to struggle.

2 *Gent.* You must be forc'd.

Bac.

240 A KING AND NO KING.

Bac. Sir, you must pardon us ;
We must obey.

Arb. Why do you dally there ?
Drag him away by any thing.

Bac. Come, Sir.

Tigr. Justice, thou ought'st to give me strength
enough

To shake all these off. This is tyranny,
Arbaces, subtler than the burning bull's ²²,
Or that fam'd tyrant's bed ²³. Thou mightst as well
Search i' the deep of winter through the snow
For half-starv'd people, to bring home with thee,
To shew 'em fire and send 'em back again,
As use me thus.

Arb. Let him be close, Bacurius.

[*Exeunt Tigranes and Bacurius.*]

Spa. I ne'er rejoic'd at any ill to him,
But this imprisonment : What shall become
Of me forsaken ?

Gob. You will not let your sister
Depart thus discontented from you, Sir ?

Arb. By no means, Gobrias : I have done her wrong,
And made myself believe much of myself,

²² ———— *This is tyranny,*

Arbaces, subtler than the burning bull's.] The allusion here is to the tyranny of Phalaris, who inclosed the wretches that had offended him, in a bull of brass, and burn'd them alive ; being delighted to hear their groans express the bellowing of a bull. One Perillus, we are told, made this savage present to Phalaris ; and the tyrant made the first experiment upon him of his own cruel ingenuity : Upon which Ovid has very properly observ'd,

————— *Nec lex est justior ulla,
Quàm necis artifices arte perire suâ.*

' There is no more equal justice, than that the artificers of mischief should suffer by their own bad arts.'

Mr. Theobald.

²³ *Or that fam'd tyrant's bed.*] The poets allude to the bed of the inhuman Procrustes, an infamous robber of Attica, who compell'd all his prisoners to lie in it ; and, if they were too short, he by racks stretch'd out their limbs to the extent of it ; if they were of too tall a stature, he lopp'd off their feet, and reduced them to a length suitable to his bed.

Mr. Theobald.

A KING AND NO KING. 241

That is not in me. You did kneel to me,
 Whilst I stood stubborn and regardless by,
 And, like a god incensed, gave no ear
 To all your prayers. Behold, I kneel to you :
 Shew a contempt as large as was my own,
 And I will suffer it ; yet, at the last, forgive me.

Pan. Oh, you wrong me more in this
 Than in your rage you did : You mock me now.

Arb. Never forgive me, then ; which is the worst
 Can happen to me.

Pan. If you be in earnest,
 Stand up, and give me but a gentle look,
 And two kind words, and I shall be in Heaven.

Arb. Rise you then too²⁴ : Here I acknowledge thee
 My hope, the only jewel of my life,
 The best of sisters, dearer than my breath,
 A happiness as high as I could think ;
 And when my actions call thee otherwise,
 Perdition light upon me !

Pan. This is better
 Than if you had not frown'd ; it comes to me
 Like mercy at the block : And when I leave
 To serve you with my life, your curse be with me !

Arb. Then thus I do salute thee ; and again,
 To make this knot the stronger. Paradise
 Is there ! It may be, you are yet in doubt ;
 This third kiss blots it out.—I wade in sin,
 And foolishly intice myself along !
 Take her away ; see her a prisoner
 In her own chamber, closely, Gobrias !

Pan. Alas ! Sir, why ?

Arb. I must not stay the answer. Do it !

Gob. Good Sir !

Arb. No more ! Do it, I say !

Mar. This is better and better.

Pan. Yet, hear me speak.

²⁴ Rise you then to hear ; I acknowledge thee, &c.] The alteration,
 which is Mr. Theobald's, we doubt not will appear proper, to every
 reader who considers the preceeding speeches.

242 A KING AND NO KING.

Arb. I will not hear you speak.
Away with her ! Let no man think to speak
For such a creature ; for she is a witch,
A poisoner, and a traitor !

Gob. Madam, this office grieves me.

Pan. Nay, 'tis well ; the king is pleased with it.

Arb. Bessus, go you along too with her. I will prove
All this that I have said, if I may live
So long. But I am desperately sick ;
For she has given me poison in a kiss :
She had it 'twixt her lips ; and with her eyes
She witches people. Go, without a word !

Exeunt Gob. Pan. Bes. and Spar.

Why should you, that have made me stand in war
Like Fate itself, cutting what threads I pleas'd,
Decree such an unworthy end of me,
And all my glories ? What am I, alas,
That you oppose me ? If my secret thoughts
Have ever harbour'd swellings against you,
They could not hurt you ; and it is in you
To give me sorrow, that will render me
Apt to receive your mercy : Rather so,
Let it be rather so, than punish me
With such unmanly sins. Incest²⁵ is in me
Dwelling already ; and it must be holy,
That pulls it thence. Where art, Mardonius ?

Mar. Here, Sir.

Arb. I pray thee, bear me, if thou canst.
Am I not grown a strange weight ?

Mar. As you were.

²⁵ ——— Incest is in me

Dwelling already, and it must be holy

That pulls it thence.] The obscurity of this passage, puzzled me a great while ; but by pondering often over it, I think, I have traced the intention of the Poets. The king would say, that incest has already taken up its residence in him ; and is a sin of so horrid a die, that nothing but the assistance of the *holy* powers can expel it.

Mr. Theobald.

As it stands so frequently for *that which*, it is surprizing Mr. Theobald should have been puzzled about this passage.

Arb.

Arb. No heavier?

Mar. No, Sir.

Arb. Why, my legs

Refuse to bear my body! Oh, Mardonius,
Thou hast in field beheld me, when thou know'st
I could have gone, thou I could never run.

Mar. And so I shall again.

Arb. Oh, no, 'tis past.

Mar. Pray you, go rest yourself.

Arb. Wilt thou, hereafter, when they talk of me,
As thou shalt hear nothing but infamy,
Remember some of those things?

Mar. Yes, I will.

Arb. I pray thee, do; for thou shalt never see
me so again. [Exeunt.

Enter Bessus, alone.

Bes. They talk of Fame; I have gotten it in the wars, and will afford any man a reasonable pennyworth. Some will say, they could be content to have it, but that it is to be achiev'd with danger; but my opinion is otherwise: For if I might stand still in cannon-proof, and have Fame fall upon me, I would refuse it. My reputation came principally by thinking to run away, which nobody knows but Mardonius; and, I think, he conceals it to anger me. Before I went to the wars, I came to the town a young fellow, without means or parts to deserve friends; and my empty guts persuaded me to lye, and abuse people, for my meat; which I did, and they beat me. Then would I fast two days, till my hunger cry'd out on me, 'Rail still:' Then, methought, I had a monstrous stomach to abuse 'em again, and did it. In this state I continued, till they hung me up by th' heels, and beat me wi' halle-sticks, as if they would have baked me, and have cozen'd some body wi' me for venison. After this I rail'd, and eat quietly: For the whole kingdom took notice of me for a baffled whip'd fellow, and what I said

244 A KING AND NO KING.

was remembred in mirth, but never in anger, of which I was glad. I would it were at that pass again! After this, Heaven call'd an aunt of mine, that left two hundred pounds in a cousin's hand for me; who, taking me to be a gallant young spirit, raised a company for me with the money, and sent me into Armenia with 'em. Away I would have run from them, but that I could get no company; and alone I durst not run. I was never at battle but once, and there I was running, but Mardonius cudgel'd me: Yet I got loose at last, but was so afraid that I saw no more than my shoulders do; but fled with my whole company amongst mine enemies, and overthrew 'em: Now the report of my valour is come over before me, and they say I was a raw young fellow, but now I am improv'd: A plague on their eloquence! 'twill cost me many a beating; and Mardonius might help this too, if he would; for now they think to get honour on me, and all the men I have abus'd call me freshly to account, (worthily, as they call it) by the way of challenge.

Enter a gentleman.

Gent. Good-morrow, captain Bessus.

Bes. Good-morrow, Sir.

Gent. I come to speak with you——

Bes. You're very welcome.

Gent. From one that holds himself wrong'd by you some three years since. Your worth, he says, is fam'd, and he doth nothing doubt but you will do him right, as beseems a soldier.

Bes. A pox on 'em, so they cry all!

Gent. And a slight note I have about me for you, for the delivery of which you must excuse me: It is an office that friendship calls upon me to do, and no way offensive to you; since I desire but right on both sides.

Bes. 'Tis a challenge, Sir, is it not?

Gent. 'Tis an inviting to the field.

Bes.

A KING AND NO KING. 245

Bef. An inviting ? Oh, cry you mercy ! what a compliment he delivers it with ! he might, as agreeably to my nature, present me poison with such a speech. Um, um, um—*Reputation*—um, um, um—*call you to account*—um, um, um—*forc'd to this*—um, um, um—*with my sword*—um, um, um—*like a gentleman*—um, um, um—*dear to me*—um, um, um—*satisfaction*. 'Tis very well, Sir ; I do accept it ; but he must await an answer this thirteen weeks.

Gent. Why, Sir, he would be glad to wipe off his stain as soon as he could.

Bef. Sir, upon my credit, I am already engag'd to two hundred and twelve ; all which must have their stains wip'd off, if that be the word, before him.

Gent. Sir, if you be truly engag'd but to one, he shall stay a competent time.

Bef. Upon my faith, Sir, to two hundred and twelve : And I have a spent body, too much bruised in battle ; so that I cannot fight, I must be plain, above three combats a-day. All the kindness I can shew him, is to set him resolvedly in my roll, the two hundred and thirteenth man, which is something ; for, I tell you, I think there will be more after him than before him ; I think so. Pray you commend me to him, and tell him this.

Gent. I will, Sir. Good-morrow to you.

[*Exit gentleman.*]

Bef. Good-morrow, good Sir. Certainly, my safest way were to print myself a coward, with a discovery how I came by my credit, and clap it upon every post. I have received above thirty challenges within this two hours : Marry, all but the first I put off with engagement ; and, by good fortune, the first is no madder of fighting than I ; so that that's referred. The place where it must be ended is fourday's journey off, and our arbitrators are these ; he has chosen a gentleman in travel, and I have a special friend with a quar-tain ague, like to hold him this five years, for mine ; and when his man comes home, we are to expect my

246 A KING AND NO KING.

friend's health. If they would send me challenges thus thick, as long as I liv'd, I would have no other living : I can make seven shillings a-day o' th' paper to the grocers. Yet I learn nothing by all these, but a little skill in comparing of styles : I do find evidently, that there is some one scrivener in this town, that has a great hand in writing of challenges, for they are all of a cut, and six of 'em in a hand ; and they all end, ' my reputation is dear to me, and I must require satisfaction.' Who's there ? more paper, I hope. No ; 'tis my lord Bacurius. I fear, all is not well betwixt us.

Enter Bacurius.

Bac. Now, captain Bessus ! I come about a frivolous matter, caus'd by as idle a report : You know, you were a coward.

Bes. Yery right.

Bac. And wrong'd me.

Bes. True, my lord.

Bac. But now, people will call you valiant ; desertlessly, I think ; yet, for their satisfaction, I will have you fight with me.

Bes. Oh, my good lord, my deep engagements—

Bac. Tell not me of your engagements, captain Bessus ! It is not to be put off with an excuse. For my own part, I am none of the multitude that believe your conversion from coward.

Bes. My lord, I seek not quarrels, and this belongs not to me ; I am not to maintain it.

Bac. Who, then, pray ?

Bes. Bessus the Coward wrong'd you.

Bac. Right.

Bes. And shall Bessus the Valiant maintain what Bessus the Coward did ?

Bac. I prithee leave these cheating tricks ! I swear thou shalt fight with me, or thou shalt be beaten extremely, and kick'd.

Bes. Since you provoke me thus far, my lord, I will

will fight with you; and, by my sword, it shall cost me twenty pounds, but I will have my leg well a week sooner purposely.

Bac. Your leg? why, what ails your leg? I'll do a cure on you. Stand up!

Bes. My lord, this is not noble in you.

Bac. What dost thou with such a phrase in thy mouth? I will kick thee out of all good words before I leave thee.

Bes. My lord, I take this as a punishment for the offence I did when I was a coward.

Bac. When thou wert? confess thyself a coward still, or, by this light, I'll beat thee into sponge.

Bes. Why, I am one.

Bac. Are you so, Sir? and why do you wear a sword then? Come, unbuckle! quick!

Bes. My lord?

Bac. Unbuckle, I say, and give it me; or, as I live, thy head will ache extremely.

Bes. It is a pretty hilt; and if your lordship take an affection to it, with all my heart I present it to you, for a new-year's-gift.

Bac. I thank you very heartily, sweet captain! Farewell.

Bes. One word more: I beseech your lordship to render me my knife again.

Bac. Marry, by all means, captain. Cherish yourself with it, and eat hard, good captain! we cannot tell whether we shall have any more such. Adieu, dear captain! [*Exit Bac.*]

Bes. I will make better use of this, than of my sword. A base spirit has this 'vantage of a brave one; it keeps always at a stay, nothing brings it down, not beating. I remember I promis'd the king, in a great audience, that I would make my back-biters eat my sword to a knife: How to get another sword I know not; nor know any means left for me to maintain my credit, but impudence: Therefore I will out-swear him and all his followers, that this is all that's left uneaten of my sword. [*Exit Bessus.*]

Enter Mardonius.

Mar. I'll move the king²⁶; he is most strangely alter'd: I guess the cause, I fear, too right. Heaven has some secret end in't, and 'tis a scourge, no question, justly laid upon him. He has follow'd me through twenty rooms; and ever, when I stay to wait his command, he blushes like a girl, and looks upon me as if modesty kept in his business; so turns away from me; but, if I go on, he follows me again.

²⁶ *I'll move the king, &c.*] This and all the subsequent scene betwixt the king and Mardonius has all along been printed as prose; but it came from the poets strictly in metre. To such I have reduced it with no small difficulty, and with the great assistance of the ingenious Mr. Seward: Not without the necessity of throwing out, here and there, some few trifling monosyllables, which were foisted in, as I presume, by the players, to support a cadence more to their minds; but which, indeed, much incumber the versification. *Mr. Theobald.*

We have hitherto forbore to notice the unpardonable Disregard to Veracity discovered by the Editors of 1750; who have certainly made as large sacrifices to Vanity, as ever Coquet did to the Graces. —We now mean just to inform our Readers of the falshood contained in the above note; after which we shall (unless constrained to the contrary) consign their similar assertions to the contemptuous oblivion they merit.

Mr. Theobald says, “ *All* the subsequent scene between the king “ and Mardonius has *all along* been printed as prose.” This is so very untrue, that *all the editions* (even that of 1655, the worst, we believe, ever printed) exhibit *every* speech of Arbaces in verse; and even those of Mardonius are not *all* printed in prose. We have, as nearly as possible, (that is, allowing for typographical errors) followed the old Editions in metre and lection; and are firmly persuaded, that our Poets intended Mardonius to talk plain prose, except in two or three passages, which his indignation raises to the sublime.—It is scarcely possible for a good writer, even when he intends the simplest prose, to avoid having some poetical passages; but are we therefore to count off his other words upon our fingers (for the ear, in the present case, must have been out of the question) and range them like heroics?—If this is too great a liberty to take, how then shall we venture (with the Critics of 1750) to interpolate or discard whatever we think proper; especially if the consequence should be, that we produce matter infinitely inferior to the original text. It is rather a matter of surprize, that, when these Gentlemen were about it, they did not arrange the whole of the conversations between Bessus, the Sword-men, Mardonius, &c. in the same manner; for which they undoubtedly had as much reason, and equal authority.

Enter

Enter Arbaces.

See, here he is. I do not use this, yet, I know not how, I cannot choose but weep to see him: His very enemies, I think, whose wounds have bred his fame, if they should see him now, would find tears i' their eyes.

Arb. I cannot utter it! Why should I keep
A breast to harbour thoughts I dare not speak?
Darkness is in my bosom; and their lie
A thousand thoughts that cannot brook the light.
How wilt thou vex me, when this deed is done,
Conscience, that art afraid to let me name it!

Mar. How do you, Sir?

Arb. Why, very well, Mardonius:
How dost thou do?

Mar. Better than you, I fear.

Arb. I hope, thou art; for, to be plain with thee,
Thou art in hell else! Secret scorching flames,
That far transcend earthly material fires,
Are crept into me, and there is no cure.
Is it not strange, Mardonius, there's no cure?

Mar. Sir, either I mistake, or there is something
hid, that you would utter to me.

Arb. So there is; but yet I cannot do it.

Mar. Out with it, Sir. If it be dangerous, I will
not shrink to do you service: I shall not esteem my
life a weightier matter than indeed it is. I know, 'tis
subject to more chances than it has hours; and I
were better lose it in my king's cause, than with an
ague, or a fall, or (sleeping) to a thief; as all these
are probable enough. Let me but know what I shall
do for you.

Arb. It will not out! Were you with Gobrias,
And bad him give my sister all content
The place affords, and give her leave to send
And speak to whom she please?

Mar. Yes, Sir, I was.

Arb. And did you to Bacurius say as much
About Tigranes?

Mar.

250 A KING AND NO KING.

Mar. Yes.

Arb. That's all my business.

Mar. Oh, say not so; you had an answer of this before: Besides, I think this business might be utter'd more carelessly.

Arb. Come, thou shalt have it out. I do beseech thee,

By all the love thou hast profess'd to me,
To see my sister from me.

Mar. Well; and what?

Arb. That's all.

Mar. That's strange! Shall I say nothing to her?

Arb. Not a word:

But, if thou lov'st me, find some subtle way
To make her understand by signs.

Mar. But what shall I make her understand?

Arb. Oh, Mardonius, for that I must be pardon'd.

Mar. You may; but I can only see her then.

Arb. 'Tis true;

Bear her this ring, then; and, on more advice,
Thou shalt speak to her: Tell her I do love
My kindred all; wilt thou?

Mar. Is there no more?

Arb. Oh, yes! And her the best;
Better than any brother loves his sister:
That is all.

Mar. Methinks, this need not have been deliver'd
with such a caution. I'll do it.

Arb. There is more yet: Wilt thou be faithful to
me?

Mar. Sir, if I take upon me to deliver it, after I
hear it, I'll pass through fire to do it.

Arb. I love her better than a brother ought.
Dost thou conceive me?

Mar. I hope you do not, Sir.

Arb. No! thou art dull. Kneel down before her,
And ne'er rise again, 'till she will love me.

Mar. Why, I think she does.

Arb. But, better than she does; another way;
As wives love husbands.

Mar.

A KING AND NO KING. 251

Mar. Why, I think there are few wives that love their husbands better than she does you.

Arb. Thou wilt not understand me! Is it fit This should be utter'd plainly? Take it, then, Naked as it is: I would desire her love Lasciviously, lewdly, incestuously, To do a sin that needs must damn us both; And thee too. Dost thou understand me now?

Mar. Yes; there's your ring again. What have I done

Dishonestly, in my whole life, name it, That you should put so base a business to me?

Arb. Didst thou not tell me, thou wouldst do it?

Mar. Yes, if I undertook it: But if all My hairs were lives, I would not be engag'd In such a cause to save my last life.

Arb. Oh, guilt, how poor and weak a thing art thou?

This man, that is my servant, whom my breath Might blow about the world, might beat me here, Having this cause; whilst I, press'd down with sin, Could not resist him. Hear, Mardonius! It was a motion mis-beseeming man, And I am sorry for it.

Mar. Heav'n grant you may be so! You must understand, nothing that you can utter can remove my love and service from my prince; but, otherwise, I think, I shall not love you more: For you are sinful, and, if you do this crime, you ought to have no laws; for, after this, it will be great injustice in you to punish any offender, for any crime. For myself, I find my heart too big; I feel, I have not patience to look on, whilst you run these forbidden courses. Means I have none but your favour; and I am rather glad that I shall lose 'em both together, than keep 'em with such conditions. I shall find a dwelling amongst some people, where, though our garments perhaps be coarser, we shall be richer far within, and harbour no such vices in 'em. The gods preserve and mend you!

Arb.

252 A KING AND NO KING.

Arb. Mardonius! Stay, Mardonius! for, though
My present state requires nothing but knaves
To be about me, such as are prepar'd
For every wicked act, yet who does know,
But that my loathed fate may turn about,
And I have use for honest men again?
I hope, I may; I prithee, leave me not.

Enter Bessus.

Bes. Where is the king?

Mar. There.

Bes. An't please your majesty, there's the knife.

Arb. What knife?

Bes. The sword is eaten.

Mar. Away, you fool! the king is serious,
And cannot now admit your vanities.

Bes. Vanities! I'm no honest man, if my enemies
have not brought it to this. What, do you think
I lye?

Arb. No, no, 'tis well, Bessus; 'tis very well.
I'm glad on't.

Mar. If your enemies brought it to this, your ene-
mies are cutlers. Come, leave the king.

Bes. Why, may not valour approach him?

Mar. Yes; but he has affairs. Depart, or I shall
be something unmannerly with you!

Arb. No; let him stay, Mardonius; let him stay;
I have occasion with him very weighty,
And I can spare you now.

Mar. Sir?

Arb. Why, I can spare you now.

Bes. Mardonius, give way to the state-affairs.

Mar. Indeed, you are fitter for his present purpose,
[*Exit Mar.*

Arb. Bessus, I should employ thee: Wilt thou do't?

Bes. Do't for you? By this air, I will do any thing,
without exception, be it a good, bad, or indifferent
thing.

Arb. Do not swear.

Bes.

A KING AND NO KING. 253

Bef. By this light, but I will; any thing whatsoever.

Arb. But I shall name the thing

Thy conscience will not suffer thee to do.

Bef. I would fain hear that thing.

Arb. Why, I would have thee get my sister for me:
Thou understand'st me, in a wicked manner.

Bef. Oh, you would have a bout with her? I'll do't, I'll do't, i'faith.

Arb. Wilt thou? dost thou make no more on't?

Bef. More? No. Why, is there any thing else? If there be, trust me, it shall be done too.

Arb. Hast thou no greater sense of such a sin?
Thou art too wicked for my company,
Though I have hell within me, and may'st yet
Corrupt me further! Prithee, answer me,
How do I shew to thee after this motion?

Bef. Why, your majesty looks as well, in my opinion, as ever you did since you were born.

Arb. But thou appear'st to me, after thy grant,
The ugliest, loathed, detestable thing
That I have ever met with. Thou hast eyes
Like flames of sulphur, which, methinks, do dart
Infection on me; and thou hast a mouth
Enough to take me in, where there do stand
Four rows of iron teeth.

Bef. I feel no such thing: But 'tis no matter how I look; I'll do your business as well as they that look better. And when this is dispatch'd, if you have a mind to your mother, tell me, and you shall see I'll set it hard.

Arb. My mother! Heav'n forgive me, to hear this!
I am inspir'd with horror. Now I hate thee
Worse than my sin; which, if I could come by,
Should suffer death eternal, ne'er to rise
In any breast again. Know, I will die
Languishing mad, as I resolve I shall,
Ere I will deal by such an instrument:
Thou art too sinful to employ in this.
Out of the world, away!

Bef.

254 A KING AND NO KING.

Bes. What do you mean, Sir?

Arb. Hung round with curses, take thy fearful flight
Into the desarts; where, 'mongst all the monsters,
If thou find'st one so beastly as thyself,
Thou shalt be held as innocent!

Bes. Good Sir——

Arb. If there were no such instruments as thou²⁷,
We kings could never act such wicked deeds!
Seek out a man that mocks divinity,
That breaks each precept both of God and man,
And nature too, and does it without lust,
Merely because it is a law, and good,
And live with him; for him thou canst not spoil.
Away, I say!—I will not do this sin. [*Exit Bessus.*]
I'll press it here, 'till it do break my breast:
It heaves to get out; but thou art a sin,
And, spite of torture, I will keep thee in. [*Exit.*]

A C T IV.

Enter Gobrias, Panthea, and Spaconia.

Gob. HAVE you written, madam?

Pan. Yes, good Gobrias.

Gob. And with a kindness and such winning words
As may provoke him, at one instant, feel
His double fault, your wrong, and his own rashness?

Pan. I have sent words enough, if words may
win him.

²⁷ *If there were no such instruments as thou, &c.]* The following passage, in Shakespeare's *King John*, conveys the same sentiment, and is similar to this before us.

*It is the curse of kings, to be attended
By slaves that take their humours for a warrant,
To break into the bloody house of life:
And, on the winking of authority,
To understand a law, to know the meaning
Of dang'rous majesty; when, perchance, it frowns
More upon humour, than advis'd respect.*

From

From his displeasure; and such words, I hope,
As shall gain much upon his goodness, Gobrias.
Yet fearing, since they're many, and a woman's,
A poor belief may follow, I have woven
As many truths within 'em, to speak for me,
That if he be but gracious, and receive 'em——

Gob. Good lady, be not fearful: Though he
should not

Give you your present end in this, believe it,
You shall feel, if your virtue can induce you
To labour out this tempest (which, I know,
Is but a poor proof 'gainst your patience)
All those contents, your spirit will arrive at,
Newer and sweeter to you. Your royal brother,
When he shall once collect himself, and see
How far he has been asunder from himself,
What a mere stranger to his golden temper,
Must, from those roots of virtue, never dying,
Though somewhat stopt with humour, shoot again
Into a thousand glories, bearing his fair branches
High as our hopes can look at, strait as justice,
Loaden with ripe contents. He loves you dearly,
I know it, and, I hope, I need not further
Win you to understand it.

Pan. I believe it;

But, howsoever, I am sure I love him dearly:
So dearly, that if any thing I write
For my enlarging should beget his anger,
Heav'n be a witness with me, and my faith,
I had rather live entomb'd here.

Gob. You shall not feel a worse stroke than your
grief;

I am sorry 'tis so sharp. I kiss your hand,
And this night will deliver this true story,
With this hand, to your brother.

Pan. Peace go with you! You are a good man,
[Exit Gob.]

My. Spaconia, why are you ever sad thus?

Spa. Oh, dear lady.

Pan.

Pan. Prithee discover not a way to sadness,
Nearer than I have in me. Our two sorrows
Work, like two eager hawks, who shall get highest.
How shall I lessen thine? for mine, I fear,
Is easier known than cur'd.

Spa. Heaven comfort both,
And give yours happy ends, however I
Fall in my stubborn fortunes.

Pan. This but teaches
How to be more familiar with our sorrows,
That are too much our masters. Good Spaconia,
How shall I do you service?

Spa. Noblest lady,
You make me more a slave still to your goodness,
And only live to purchase thanks to pay you;
For that is all the business of my life now.
I will be bold, since you will have it so,
To ask a noble favour of you.

Pan. Speak it; 'tis yours; for, from so sweet a virtue,
No ill demand has issue.

Spa. Then, ever-virtuous, let me beg your will
In helping me to see the prince Tigranes;
With whom I'm equal prisoner, if not more.

Pan. Reserve me to a greater end, Spaconia;
Bacurius cannot want so much good-manners
As to deny your gentle visitation,
Though you came only with your own command.

Spa. I know they will deny me, gracious madam,
Being a stranger, and so little fam'd,
So utter empty of those excellencies
That tame authority²⁸: But in you, sweet lady,
All these are natural; beside, a pow'r
Deriv'd immediate from your royal brother,
Whose least word in you may command the kingdom.

²⁸ *So utter empty of those excellencies*

That tame authority;] The oldest quarto in 1619 reads, that
have, &c. but the quarto's in 1631, 1661, and 1676, all concur in
giving us the word *tame*, which, without doubt, is the true reading.
She means, she is utterly void of those talents that can have any
controul over people in office and power.

Mr. Theobald.

Pan.

A KING AND NO KING. 257

Pan. More than my word, Spaconia, you shall carry,
For fear it fail you.

Spa. Dare you trust a token?
Madam, I fear I am grown too bold a beggar.

Pan. You are a pretty one; and, trust me, lady,
It joys me I shall do a good to you,
Though to myself I never shall be happy.
Here, take this ring, and from me as a token
Deliver it: I think they will not stay you.
So, all your own desires go with you, lady!

Spa. And sweet peace to your Grace!

Pan. Pray Heav'n, I find it! [Exeunt.

Enter Tigranes, in prison.

Tigr. Fool that I am! I have undone myself,
And with my own hand turn'd my fortune round,
That was a fair one. I have childishly
Play'd with my hope so long, 'till I have broke it,
And now too late I mourn for't. Oh, Spaconia!
Thou hast found an even way to thy revenge now.
Why didst thou follow me, like a faint shadow,
To wither my desires? But, wretched fool,
Why did I plant thee 'twixt the sun and me,
To make me freeze thus? why did I prefer her
To the fair princess? Oh, thou fool, thou fool,
Thou family of fools, live like a slave still!
And in thee bear thine own hell and thy torment;
Thou hast deserv'd it. Couldst thou find no lady,
But she that has thy hopes, to put her to,
And hazard all thy peace? none to abuse,
But she that lov'd thee ever, poor Spaconia?
And so much lov'd thee, that, in honesty
And honour, thou art bound to meet her virtues!
She, that forgot the greatness of her grief
And miseries²⁹, that must follow such mad passions,
Endless

²⁹ *And miseries, that must follow such mad passions,
Endless and wild as women?* Why must Tigranes, whilst he is
speaking in praise of one woman, abuse all women in general? Be-
Vol. I. R sides,

258 A KING AND NO KING.

Endless and wild in women ! she, that for thee,
 And with thee, left her liberty, her name,
 And country ! You have paid me, equal heav'ns,
 And sent my own rod to correct me with,
 A woman ! For inconstancy I'll suffer ;
 Lay it on, Justice, 'till my soul melt in me,
 For my unmanly, beastly, sudden doting,
 Upon a new face ; after all my oaths,
 Many, and strange ones.
 I feel my old fire flame again and burn
 So strong and violent, that, should I see her
 Again, the grief, and that, would kill me.

Enter Bacurius and Spaconia.

Bac. Lady,
 Your token I acknowledge ; you may pass ;
 There is the king.

Spa. I thank your lordship for it. [*Exit Bac.*

Tigr. She comes, she comes ! Shame hide me ever
 from her !

'Would I were bury'd, or so far remov'd
 Light might not find me out ! I dare not see her.

Spa. Nay, never hide yourself ! Or, were you hid,
 Where earth hides all her riches, near her centre,
 My wrongs, without more day, would light me to you :
 I must speak, ere I die. Were all your greatness
 Doubled upon you, you're a perjur'd man,
 And only mighty in your wickedness
 Of wronging women ! Thou art false, false, prince !
 I live to see it ; poor Spaconia lives

sides, had he a mind to abuse 'em, and apply the epithet *wild* to them, he could with no propriety add the other, *endless*. I hope, I have restor'd the true particle, which gives a very different and a very good sense to the whole sentence, *i. e.* when women, so weak to defend themselves, have such strong passions as to fly their friends, and follow a prisoner into an enemy's country, they must run the hazard of *endless* and *wild* miseries. Or if the epithets *endless* and *wild* be apply'd to passions, the sense will be much the same, and the emendation as necessary.

Mr. Seward.

To

To tell thee thou art false³⁰; and then no more!
 She lives to tell thee, thou art more inconstant
 Than all ill women ever were together.
 Thy faith is firm as raging overflows,
 That no bank can command; as lasting
 As boys' gay bubbles, blown i' th' air and broken.
 The wind is fix'd to thee; and sooner shall
 The beaten mariner, with his shrill whistle,
 Calm the loud murmur of the troubled main,
 And strike it smooth again, than thy soul fall
 To have peace in love with any: Thou art all
 That all good men must hate; and if thy story
 Shall tell succeeding ages what thou wert,
 Oh, let it spare me in it, lest true lovers,
 In pity of my wrongs, burn thy black legend,
 And with their curses shake thy sleeping ashes!

Tigr. Oh! oh!

Spa. The destinies, I hope, have pointed out
 Our ends alike, that thou may'st die for love,
 Though not for me; for, this assure thyself,
 The princess hates thee deadly, and will sooner
 Be won to marry with a bull, and safer,
 Than such a beast as thou art.—I have struck,
 I fear, too deep; beshrew me for it! Sir,
 This sorrow works me, like a cunning friendship,
 Into the same piece with it; 'tis asham'd!
 Alas, I have been too rugged. Dear my lord,
 I am sorry I have spoken any thing,
 Indeed I am, that may add more restraint
 To that too much you have. Good Sir, be pleas'd

³⁰ ——— *poor Spaconia lives*

To tell thee thou art false; and then no more.] Mr. Symphon asks, Should not Spaconia then have held her tongue? But as she goes on, he thinks the passage corrupt, and reads, *and tell thee more.* I by no means admit the change, but think the old text not only unexceptionable, but much preferable to the new one. *To tell thee thou art false*, signifies, to shew thy falshood in its true colours, which she accordingly afterwards paints pretty strongly. And *then no more*, i. e. this shall be the last time I will upbraid you with it.

Mr. Seward.

260 A KING AND NO KING.

To think it was a fault of love, not malice;
And do as I will do, forgive it, prince.
I do and can forgive the greatest sins
To me you can repent of. Pray believe.

Tigr. Oh, my Spaconia! Oh, thou virtuous woman!

Spa. No more; the king, Sir.

Enter Arbaces, Bacurius, and Mardonius.

Arb. Have you been careful of our noble prisoner,
That he want nothing fitting for his greatness?

Bac. I hope his grace will quit me for my care, Sir.

Arb. 'Tis well. Royal Tigranes, health!

Tigr. More than the strictness of this place can
give, Sir,

I offer back again to great Arbaces.

Arb. We thank you, worthy prince; and pray
excuse us,

We have not seen you since your being here.

I hope your noble usage has been equal

With your own person: Your imprisonment,

If it be any, I dare say, is easy;

And shall not outlast two days.

Tigr. I thank you.

My usage here has been the same it was,

Worthy a royal conqueror. For my restraint,

It came unkindly, because much unlook'd-for;

But I must bear it.

Arb. What lady's that, Bacurius?

Bac. One of the princess' women, Sir,

Arb. I fear'd it. Why comes she hither?

Bac. To speak with the prince Tigranes.

Arb. From whom, Bacurius?

Bac. From the princess, Sir.

Arb. I knew I had seen her.

Mar. His fit begins to take him now again.

'Tis a strange fever, and 'twill shake us all anon, I

fear. 'Would he were well cur'd of this raging folly:

Give me the wars, where men are mad, and may talk

what they list, and held the bravest fellows; this

pelting

A KING AND NO KING. 261

pelting prating peace is good for nothing: Drinking's a virtue to't.

Arb. I see there's truth in no man, nor obedience, But for his own ends: Why did you let her in?

Bac. It was your own command to bar none from him:

Besides, the princess sent her ring, Sir, for my warrant.

Arb. A token to Tigranes, did she not?
Sir, tell truth.

Bac. I do not use to lye, Sir.
'Tis no way I eat, or live by, and I think
This is no token, Sir.

Mar. This combat has undone him: If he had been well beaten, he had been temperate. I shall never see him handsome again, 'till he have a horseman's staff yok'd through his shoulders, or an arm broke with a bullet.

Arb. I am trifled with.

Bac. Sir?

Arb. I know it, as I know thee to be false.

Mar. Now the clap comes.

Bac. You never knew me so, Sir, I dare speak it; And, durst a worse man tell me, though my better—

Mar. 'Tis well said, by my soul.

Arb. Sirrah, you answer as you had no life.

Bac. That I fear, Sir, to lose nobly.

Arb. I say, Sir, once again——

Bac. You may say what you please, Sir:
Would I might do so.

Arb. I will, Sir; and say openly, this woman carries letters: By my life, I know she carries letters; this woman does it.

Mar. 'Would Bessus were here, to take her aside and search her; he would quickly tell you what she carried, Sir.

Arb. I have found it out, this woman carries letters.

Mar. If this hold, 'twill be an ill world for bawds, chamber-maids, and post-boys. I thank Heav'n, I

have none but his letters-patents, things of his own inditing.

Arb. Prince, this cunning cannot do't.

Tigr. Do what, Sir? I reach you not.

Arb. It shall not serve your turn, prince.

Tigr. Serve my turn, Sir?

Arb. Ay, Sir, it shall not serve your turn.

Tigr. Be plainer, good Sir.

Arb. This woman shall carry no more letters back to your love Panthea; by Heav'n, she shall not; I say she shall not.

Mar. This would make a faint swear like a foldier, and a foldier like Termagant³¹.

Tigr. This beats me more, king, than the blows you gave me.

Arb. Take 'em away both, and together let them prisoners be, strictly and closely kept; or, sirrah, your life shall answer it; and let nobody speak with 'em hereafter.

Tigr. Well, I am subject to you,
And must endure these passions:

Spa. This is th' imprisonment I have look'd for
always,
And the dear place I would choose.

[*Exeunt Tigr. Spa. Bac.*]

Mar. Sir, have you done well now?

Arb. Dare you reprove it?

Mar. No.

Arb. You must be crossing me.

Mar. I have no letters, Sir, to anger you,
But a dry sonnet of my corporal's,
To an old futtler's wife; and that I'll burn, Sir.
'Tis like to prove a fine age for the ignorant.

³¹ *And a soldier like Termagant.*] Termagant was an old swearing, swaggering character, well known for some centuries past. It is mention'd by Shakespeare in his Hamlet; by Spenser in his Fairy-Queen; by Chaucer in his Tale of Sir Thopas, and in several old plays.

Mr. Theobald.

Termagant was a Saracen deity, very clamorous and violent in the old moralities.

Percy.

Arb.

A KING AND NO KING. 263

Arb. How dar'st thou so often forfeit thy life?
Thou know'st 'tis in my power to take it.

Mar. Yes, and I know you wo' not; or, if you do, you'll miss it quickly.

Arb. Why?

Mar. Who shall tell you of these childish follies,
When I am dead? who shall put to his power
To draw those virtues out of a flood of humours,
When they are drown'd, and make 'em shine again?
No, cut my head off:
Then you may talk, and be believ'd, and grow worse,
And have your too-self-glorious temper rock'd
Into a deep sleep³², and the kingdom with you;
Till foreign swords be in your throats, and slaughter
Be every where about you, like your flatterers.
Do, kill me!

Arb. Prithee, be tamer, good Mardonius.
Thou know'st I love thee; nay, I honour thee;
Believe it, good old foldier, I am thine:
But I am rack'd clean from myself! Bear with me!
Woo't thou bear with me, my Mardonius?

Enter Gobrias.

Mar. There comes a good man; love him too;
he's temperate;
You may live to have need of such a virtue;
Rage is not still in fashion.

Arb. Welcome, good Gobrias.

Gob. My service, and this letter, to your Grace.

Arb. From whom?

Gob. From the rich mine of virtue and beauty,
Your mournful sister.

Arb. She is in prison, Gobrias, is she not?

³² *And have your too self-glorious temper rot*

Into a deep sleep.] Besides the impropriety of *rotting* into sleep, the expression is too coarse for the character of Mardonius; who, though bold and honest, is not abusive. I hope I have restored the original word.

Mr. Seward.

This emendation is finely imagined; and is sufficiently confirmed by the three verses that follow.

Mr. Theobald.

264 A KING AND NO KING.

Gob. She is, Sir, till your pleasure do enlarge her,
Which on my knees I beg. Oh, 'tis not fit,
That all the sweetness of the world in one,
The youth and virtue that would tame wild tygers,
And wilder people, that have known no manners,
Should live thus cloister'd up ! For your love's sake,
If there be any in that noble heart
To her, a wretched lady, and forlorn ;
Or for her love to you, which is as much
As nature and obedience ever gave,
Have pity on her beauties.

Arb. Pray thee, stand up : 'Tis true, she is too fair,
And all these commendations but her own :
'Would thou hadst never so commended her,
Or I ne'er liv'd to have heard it, Gobrias !
If thou but knew'st the wrong her beauty does her,
Thou wouldst, in pity of her, be a liar.
Thy ignorance has drawn me, wretched man,
Whither myself, nor thou, canst well tell. Oh, my fate !
I think she loves me, but I fear another
Is deeper in her heart : How think'st thou, Gobrias ?

Gob. I do beseech your Grace, believe it not ;
For, let me perish, if it be not false !
Good Sir, read her letter.

Mar. This love, or what a devil it is, I know not,
begets more mischief than a wake. I had rather be
well beaten, starv'd, or lousy, than live within the air
on't. He, that had seen this brave fellow charge
through a grove of pikes but t'other day, and look
upon him now, will ne'er believe his eyes again. If
he continue thus but two days more, a taylor may
beat him, with one hand tied behind him.

Arb. Alas, she would be at liberty ;
And there be thousand reasons, Gobrias,
'Thousands, that will deny't ;
Which, if she knew, she would contentedly
Be where she is, and bless her virtues for it,
And me, though she were closer : She would, Gobrias ;
Good man, indeed, she would.

Gob.

A KING AND NO KING. 265

Gob. Then, good Sir, for her satisfaction,
Send for her, and, with reason, make her know
Why she must live thus from you.

Arb. I will. Go bring her to me. [*Exeunt.*

Enter Bessus, two Sword-men, and a boy.

Bes. You're very welcome, both! Some stools there,
boy;

And reach a table. Gentleman o' th' sword,
Pray sit, without more compliment. Be gone, child!
I have been curious in the searching of you,
Because I understand you wise and valiant persons.

1 Sw. We understand ourselves, Sir.

Bes. Nay, gentlemen, and dear friends o' th'
sword,

No compliment, I pray; but to the cause
I hang upon, which, in few, is my honour.

2 Sw. You cannot hang too much, Sir, for your
honour.

But to your cause.

Bes. Be wise, and speak truth.

My first doubt is, my beating by my prince.

1 Sw. Stay there a little, Sir: Do you doubt a
beating?

Or, have you had a beating by your prince?

Bes. Gentlemen o' th' sword, my prince has beaten
me.

2 Sw. Brother, what think you of this case?

1 Sw. If he has beaten him, the case is clear.

2 Sw. If he have beaten him, I grant the case.

But how? we cannot be too subtle in this business.

I say, but how?

Bes. Even with his royal hand.

1 Sw. Was it a blow of love, or indignation?

Bes. 'Twas twenty blows of indignation, gentle-
men;

Beides two blows o' th' face.

1 Sw. Those blows o' th' face have made a new
cause on't;

The rest were but an honourable rudeness.

1 Sw.

266 A KING AND NO KING.

1 Sw. Two blows o' th' face, and given by a worse man, I must confess, as the sword-men say, had turn'd the business: Mark me, brother, by a worse man: But, being by his prince, had they been ten, and those ten drawn ten teeth, besides the hazard of his nose for ever; all this had been but favours. This is my flat opinion, which I'll die in.

2 Sw. The king may do much, captain, believe it; for had he crack'd your skull through, like a bottle, or broke a rib or two with tossing of you, yet you had lost no honour. This is strange, you may imagine, but this is truth now, captain.

Bef. I will be glad to embrace it, gentlemen. But how far may he strike me?

1 Sw. There is another; a new cause rising from the time and distance, in which I will deliver my opinion. He may strike, beat, or cause to be beaten; for these are natural to man: Your prince, I say, may beat you so far forth as his dominion reacheth; that's for the distance; the time, ten miles a-day, I take it.

2 Sw. Brother you err, 'tis fifteen miles a-day; His stage is ten, his beatings are fifteen.

Bef. 'Tis of the longest, but we subjects must—

1 Sw. Be subject to it: You are wise and virtuous.

Bef. Obedience ever makes that noble use on't, To which I dedicate my beaten body. I must trouble you a little further, gentlemen o' th sword.

2 Sw. No trouble at all to us, Sir, if we may Profit your understanding: We are bound, By virtue of our calling, to utter our opinions. Shortly, and discretely.

Bef. My forest business is, I have been kick'd.

2 Sw. How far, Sir?

Bef. Not to flatter myself in it, all over³³: My

³³ Not to flatter myself in it, all over; my sword forc'd, but not lost;] This is as absurd and ridiculous a transposition (made thro' the error of the copyists, or at press) as we shall meet with in hist. Tho' Bessius was by nature and habit a liar, yet here he mean to represent the state of his case seriously to the Sword-men, to have
heir

sword lost, but not forc'd ; for discretely I render'd it, to save that imputation.

1 Sw. It shew'd discretion, the best part of valour.

2 Sw. Brother, this is a pretty case; pray ponder on't: Our friend here has been kick'd.

1 Sw. He has so, brother.

2 Sw. Sorely, he says. Now, had he set down here, Upon the mere kick, 't had been cowardly.

1 Sw. I think, it had been cowardly, indeed.

2 Sw. But our friend has redeem'd it, in delivering His sword without compulsion; and that man That took it of him, I pronounce a weak one, And his kicks nullities.

He should have kick'd him after the delivery, Which is the confirmation of a coward.

1 Sw. Brother, I take it, you mistake the question; For, say, that I were kick'd.

2 Sw. I must not say so; Nor I must not hear it spoke by th' tongue of man. You kick'd, dear brother! You're merry.

1 Sw. But put the case, I were kick'd.

2 Sw. Let them put it, that are things weary of their lives, and know not honour! Put the case, you were kick'd!

1 Sw. I do not say, I was kick'd.

2 Sw. Nor no silly creature that wears his head without a case, his soul in a skin-coat. You kick'd, dear brother!

Bes. Nay, gentlemen, let us do what we shall do, Truly and honestly. Good Sirs, to the question.

their opinion upon it. We find in a preceding scene, that, upon Bacurius discovering him to be a notorious poltron, he orders him to unbuckle and deliver up his sword. Bessus obeys, and does it with a Gasconade; saying, *it is a pretty hilt, and if his lordship takes an affection to it, with all his heart he'll present it to him for a new-years-gift.* How then was his sword forc'd from him? It was not; for he immediately subjoins here to the Sword-men; *for I discretely render'd it to save that imputation.* All the editions concur in the blunder; and, I imagine, the most accurate readers may have slip'd over this absurdity. Let the two words *forc'd* and *lost* change places, and then all is clear, and the fact truly stated. *Mr. Theobald.*

1 Sw.

268 A KING AND NO KING.

1 Sw. Why, then, I say, suppose your boy kick'd, captain.

2 Sw. The boy, may be suppos'd, is liable. But, kick my brother !

1 Sw. A foolish forward zeal, Sir, in my friend. But to the boy : Suppose, the boy were kick'd.

Bef. I do suppose it.

1 Sw. Has your boy a sword ?

Bef. Surely, no ; I pray, suppose a sword too.

1 Sw. I do suppose it. You grant, your boy was kick'd then.

2 Sw. By no means, captain ; let it be supposed still ; the word ' grant ' makes not for us.

1 Sw. I say, this must be granted ³⁴.

2 Sw. This must be granted, brother ?

1 Sw. Ay, this must be granted.

2 Sw. Still, this must ?

1 Sw. I say, this must be granted.

2 Sw. Ay ! give me the must again ! Brother, you palter.

1 Sw. I will not hear you, wasp ³⁵.

2 Sw.

³⁴ 1 Sw. *I say, this must be granted.*

2 Sw. *This must be granted, brother ?*

1 Sw. *Ay, this must be granted.*

2 Sw. *Still this must*] The poets here are flirting (I was almost going to say, invidiously) at a passage in Shakespeare's *Coriolanus*.

*It is a mind
That shall remain a poison where it is,
Not poison any further.*

Cor. *Shall remain ?*

*Hear you this triton of the minnows ? Mark you
His absolute shall ?*

Com. *'Twas from the Canon.*

Cor. *Shall !*

*Have you thus
Giv'n Hydra here to choose an officer,
That with his peremptory shall —
— They choose their magistrate !
And such a one as he, who puts his shall,
His popular shall, &c.*

Mr. Theobald.

³⁵ 1 Sw. *I will not bear you, wasp.*] Here again is a sneer upon that celebrated quarrelling scene betwixt Brutus and Cassius, in Shakespeare's *Julius Cæsar*.

Mus

A KING AND NO KING. 269

2 Sw. Brother, I say you palter; the must three times together! I wear as sharp steel as another man, and my fox bites as deep³⁶. Musted, my dear brother! But to the cause again.

Bef. Nay, look you, gentlemen!

2 Sw. In a word, I ha' done.

1 Sw. A tall man, but intemperate; 'tis great pity. Once more, suppose the boy kick'd.

2 Sw. Forward.

1 Sw. And, being thoroughly kick'd, laughs at the kicker.

2 Sw. So much for us. Proceed.

1 Sw. And in this beaten scorn, as I may call it, Delivers up his weapon; where lies the error?

Bef. It lies i' th' beating, Sir: I found it four days since.

2 Sw. The error, and a fore one, as I take it, Lies in the thing kicking.

Bef. I understand that well; 'tis fore, indeed, Sir.

1 Sw. That is according to the man that did it.

2 Sw. There springs a new branch: Whose was the foot?

Bef. A lord's.

1 Sw. The cause is mighty; but, had it been two lords, And both had kick'd you, if you laugh'd, 'tis clear.

Bef. I did laugh; But how will that help me, gentlemen?

2 Sw. Yes, it shall help you, if you laugh'd aloud.

Bef. As loud as a kick'd man could laugh, I laugh'd, Sir.

*Must I budge?
Must I observe you? Must I stand and crouch
Under your testy humour? By the gods,
You shall digest the venom of your spleen,
Tho' it do split you. For, from this day forth,
I'll use you for my mirth, yea, for my laughter,
When you are walspath.* Mr. Theobald.

³⁶ My fox bites as deep, &c.] Our authors use the word *fox*, to signify a sword, in Philaster, as well as here. It is also to be found in the same sense, in Shakespeare.

R.

1 Sw.

270 A KING AND NO KING.

1 Sw. My reason now : The valiant man is known
By suffering and contemning ; you have
Enough of both, and you are valiant.

2 Sw. If he be sure he has been kick'd enough :
For that brave sufferance you speak of, brother,
Consists not in a beating and away,
But in a cudgel'd body, from eighteen
To eight and thirty ; in a head rebuk'd
With pots of all size ³⁷, daggers, stools, and bed-
staves :

This shews a valiant man.

Bef. Then I am valiant, as valiant as the proudest ;
For these are all familiar things to me ;
Familiar as my sleep, or want of money :
All my whole body's but one bruise, with beating.
I think I have been cudgel'd with all nations,
And almost all religions.

2 Sw. Embrace him, brother ! this man is valiant ;
I know it by myself, he's valiant.

1 Sw. Captain, thou art a valiant gentleman,
To bide upon, a very valiant man.

Bef. My equal friends o' th' sword, I must request
Your hands to this.

2 Sw. 'Tis fit it should be.

Bef. Boy, get some wine, and pen and ink, within.
Am I clear, gentlemen ?

1 Sw. Sir, when the world has taken notice what we
have done,
Make much of your body ; for I'll pawn my steel,
Men will be coyer of their legs hereafter.

Bef. I must request you go along, and testify to the

³⁷ ————— in a head rebuk'd, &c.] There is a pleasant
passage in Plautus's Persian about Parasites, whom he styles *hard-
headed* fellows, because they had frequently things thrown at their
pates.

His cognomentum erat duris capitonibus.

Casaubon has this note upon the place. *Olim inter alia instrumenta
perditi luxus, & matulæ in triclinia inferri solitæ ; quas sæpe,
ubi incaluisse, in capita sibi invicem illi serunt. Hinc dicti prop-
terea Parasiti, duri capiones.*

Mr. Sympsen.

lord

A KING AND NO KING. 271

lord Bacurius, whose foot has struck me, how you find my cause.

2 Sw. We will ; and tell that lord he must be rul'd ;
Or there be those abroad, will rule his lordship.

[*Exeunt.*]

Enter Arbaces at one door, and Gobrias and Panthea at another.

Gob. Sir, here's the princess.

Arb. Leave us, then, alone ;

For the main cause of her imprisonment

Must not be heard by any but herself. [*Exit Gob.*]

You're welcome, sister ; and I would to Heav'n

I could so bid you by another name.

If you above love not such sins as these,

Circle my heart with thoughts as cold as snow,

To quench these rising flames that harbour here.

Pan. Sir, does it please you I shall speak ?

Arb. Please me ?

Ay, more than all the art of music can,

Thy speech doth please me ; for it ever sounds

As thou brought'st joyful unexpected news :

And yet it is not fit thou shouldst be heard ;

I pray thee, think so.

Pan. Be it so ; I will.

Am I the first that ever had a wrong

So far from being fit to have redress,

That 'twas unfit to hear it ? I will back

To prison, rather than disquiet you,

And wait till it be fit.

Arb. No, do not go ;

For I will hear thee with a serious thought :

I have collected all that's man about me

Together strongly, and I am resolv'd

To hear thee largely : But I do beseech thee,

Do not come nearer to me ; for there is

Something in that, that will undo us both.

Pan. Alas, Sir, am I venom ?

Arb. Yes, to me ;

Though,

272 A KING AND NO KING.

Though, of thyself, I think thee to be in
As equal a degree of heat or cold,
As nature can make: Yet, as unsound men
Convert the sweetest and the nourishing'st meats
Into diseases, so shall I, distemper'd,
Do thee: I pray thee, draw no nearer to me.

Pan. Sir, this is that I would: I am of late
Shut from the world, and why it should be thus
Is all I wish to know.

Arb. Why, credit me,
Panthea, credit me, that am thy brother,
Thy loving brother, that there is a cause
Sufficient, yet unfit for thee to know,
That might undo thee everlastingly,
Only to hear. Wilt thou but credit this?
By Heav'n, 'tis true; believe it, if thou can'st.

Pan. Children and fools are ever credulous,
And I am both, I think, for I believe.
If you dissemble, be it on your head!
I'll back unto my prison. Yet, methinks,
I might be kept in some place where you are;
For in myself I find, I know not what
To call it, but it is a great desire
To see you often.

Arb. Fie, you come in a step; what do you mean?
Dear sister, do not so! Alas, Panthea,
Where I am would you be? why, that's the cause
You are imprison'd, that you may not be
Where I am.

Pan. Then I must endure it, Sir. Heav'n keep
you!

Arb. Nay, you shall hear the cause in short, Pan-
thea;

And, when thou hear'st it, thou wilt blush for me,
And hang thy head down like a violet
Full of the morning's dew. There is a way
To gain thy freedom; but, 'tis such a one
As puts thee in worse bondage, and I know
Thou wouldst encounter fire, and make a proof

Whether

Whether the gods have care of innocence,
Rather than follow it: Know, that I've lost,
The only difference betwixt man and beast,
My reason.

Pan. Heav'n forbid!

Arb. Nay, it is gone;
And I am left as far without a bound
As the wild ocean, that obeys the winds;
Each sudden passion throws me where it lists,
And overwhelms all that oppose my will.
I have beheld thee with a lustful eye;
My heart is set on wickedness, to act
Such sins with thee, as I have been afraid
To think of. If thou dar'st consent to this,
Which, I beseech thee, do not, thou may'st gain
Thy liberty, and yield me a content;
If not, thy dwelling must be dark and close,
Where I may never see thee: For, Heav'n knows,
That laid this punishment upon my pride,
Thy sight at some time will enforce my madness
To make a start e'en to thy ravishing.
Now spit upon me, and call all reproaches
Thou canst devise together, and at once
Hurl 'em against me; for I am a sickness
As killing as the plague, ready to seize thee.

Pan. Far be it from me to revile the king!
But it is true, that I shall rather choose
To search out death, that else would search out me,
And in a grave sleep with my innocence,
Than welcome such a sin. It is my fate;
To these cross accidents I was ordain'd,
And must have patience; and, but that my eyes
Have more of woman in 'em than my heart,
I would not weep. Peace enter you again!

Arb. Farewell; and, good Panthea, pray for me,
(Thy prayers are pure) that I may find a death,
However soon, before my passions grow,
That they forget what I desire is sin;
For thither they are tending: If that happen,

274 A KING AND NO KING.

Then I shall force thee, tho' thou wert a virgin
By vow to Heaven, and shall pull a heap
Of strange, yet uninvented, sin upon me.

Pan. Sir, I will pray for you ; yet you shall know
It is a fullen fate that governs us :

For I could wish, as heartily as you,
I were no sister to you ; I should then
Embrace your lawful love, sooner than health.

Arb. Couldst thou affect me then ?

Pan. So perfectly,
That, as it is, I ne'er shall sway my heart
To like another.

Arb. Then I curse my birth !
Must this be added to my miseries,
That thou art willing too ? Is there no stop
To our full happiness, but these mere sounds,
Brother and sister ?

Pan. There is nothing else :
But these, alas ! will separate us more
Than twenty worlds betwixt us.

Arb. I have liv'd
To conquer men, and now am overthrown
Only by words, brother and sister. Where
Have those words dwelling ? I will find 'em out,
And utterly destroy 'em ; but they are
Not to be grasp'd : Let them be men or beasts,
And I will cut 'em from the earth ; or towns,
And I will raze 'em, and then blow 'em up :
Let 'em be seas, and I will drink 'em off,
And yet have unquench'd fire left in my breast :
Let 'em be any thing but merely voice.

Pan. But 'tis not in the pow'r of any force,
Or policy, to conquer them.

Arb. Panthea,
What shall we do ? Shall we stand firmly here,
And gaze our eyes out ?

Pan. 'Would I could do so !
But I shall weep out mine.

Arb. Accursed man,
Thou bought'st thy reason at too dear a rate ;

For

For thou hast all thy actions bounded in
With curious rules, when ev'ry beast is free :
What is there that acknowledges a kindred,
But wretched man ? Who ever saw the bull
Fearfully leave the heifer that he lik'd,
Because they had one dam ?

Pan. Sir, I disturb
You and myself too ; 'twere better I were gone.

Arb. I will not be so foolish as I was ;
Stay, we will love just as becomes our births,
No otherwise : Brothers and sisters may
Walk hand in hand together ; so will we.
Come nearer : Is there any hurt in this ?

Pan. I hope not.

Arb. Faith, there is none at all :
And tell me truly now, is there not one
You love above me ?

Pan. No, by Heav'n.

Arb. Why, yet you sent unto Tigranes, sister.

Pan. True,
But for another : For the truth——

Arb. No more.
I'll credit thee ; thou canst not lie,
Thou art all truth.

Pan. But is there nothing else,
That we may do, but only walk ? Methinks,
Brothers and sisters lawfully may kiss.

Arb. And so they may, Panthea ; so will we ;
And kiss again too ; we were too scrupulous
And foolish, but we will be so no more.

Pan. If you have any mercy, let me go
To prison, to my death, to any thing :
I feel a sin growing upon my blood,
Worse than all these, hotter than yours.

Arb. That is impossible ; what should we do ?

Pan. Fly, Sir, for Heav'n's sake.

Arb. So we must ; away !
Sin grows upon us more by this delay.

[*Exeunt, several ways.*]

A C T V.

Enter Mardonius and Lygones.

Mar. **S**IR, the king has seen your commission, and believes it; and freely by this warrant gives you power to visit prince Tigranes, your noble master.

Lyg. I thank his grace, and kiss his hand.

Mar. But is the main of all your business ended in this?

Lyg. I have another, but a worse; I am ashamed! it is a business——

Mar. You serve a worthy person; and a stranger, I am sure, you are: You may employ me, if you please, without your purse; such offices should ever be their own rewards.

Lyg. I am bound to your nobleness.

Mar. I may have need of you, and then this courtesy,

If it be any, is not ill bestow'd.

But may I civilly desire the rest³⁸?

I shall not be a hurter, if no helper.

Lyg. Sir, you shall know: I have lost a foolish daughter,

And with her all my patience; pilfer'd away
By a mean captain of your king's.

³⁸ *But may I civilly desire the rest?*] Mardonius may seem here at first view, to be over inquisitive into the secrets of one, whom he had never seen before: but he, first, offers him his best services without fee, or reward. But the motive of the poets for this curiosity was to let the audience be inform'd that Lygones was the father of Spaconia; and that a scurvy captain, belonging to Arbaces, had pilfer'd her away from him.

Mr. Theobald.

It is certainly the usual intention, as well as business, of dramatic poets, to convey the plot to the audience; yet that ought always to be effected by natural and probable means; and we think there is no force used in the present dialogue.

Mar.

Mar. Stay there, Sir :

If he have reach'd the noble worth of captain,
He may well claim a worthy gentlewoman,
Though she were yours, and noble.

Lyg. I grant all that too : But this wretched fellow
Reaches no further than the empty name,
That serves to feed him. Were he valiant,
Or had but in him any noble nature,
That might hereafter promise him a good man,
My cares were so much lighter, and my grave
A span yet from me.

Mar. I confess, such fellows
Be in all royal camps, and have and must be,
To make the sin of coward more detested
In the mean soldier, that with such a foil
Sets off much valour. By description,
I should now guess him to you ; it was Bessus,
I dare almost with confidence pronounce it.

Lyg. 'Tis such a scurvy name as Bessus ; and, now
I think, 'tis he.

Mar. Captain do you call him ?
Believe me, Sir, you have a misery
Too mighty for your age : A pox upon him !
For that must be the end of all his service.
Your daughter was not mad, Sir ?

Lyg. No ; 'would she had been !
The fault had had more credit. I would do something.

Mar. I would fain counsel you ; but to what I
know not.

He's so below a beating, that the women
Find him not worthy of their distaves, and
To hang him were to cast away a rope.
He's such an airy, thin, unbodied coward,
That no revenge can catch him.
I'll tell you, Sir, and tell you truth ; this rascal
Fears neither God nor man, h'as been so beaten :
Sufferance has made him wainscot ; he has had,
Since he was first a slave, at least three hundred daggers
Set in's head, as little boys do new knives in hot meat.
There's not a rib in's body, o' my conscience,

278 A KING AND NO KING.

That has not been thrice broken with dry beating :
And now his sides look like two wicker targets,
Every way bended ;
Children will shortly take him for a wall,
And set their stone-bows in his forehead.
He is of so base a sense, I cannot in a week imagine
what shall be done to him.

Lyg. Sure, I have committed some great sin
That this base fellow should be made my rod.
I would see him ; but I shall have no patience.

Mar. 'Tis no great matter, if you have not : If a
laming of him, or such a toy, may do you pleasure,
Sir, he has it for you ; and I'll help you to him.
'Tis no news to him to have a leg broke, or a shoulder
out, with being turn'd o' th' stones like a tanfy.
Draw not your sword, if you love it ; for, on my
conscience, his head will break it : We use him i'th'
wars like a ram, to shake a wall withal. Here comes
the very person of him ; do as you shall find your
temper ; I must leave you : But if you do not break
him like a bisket, you're much to blame, Sir.

[*Exit Mar.*

Enter Bessus and the Sword-men.

Lyg. Is your name Bessus ?

Bes. Men call me captain Bessus.

Lyg. Then, captain Bessus, you're a rank rascal,
without more exordiums ; a dirty frozen slave ! and,
with the favour of your friends here, I will beat
you.

2 Sw. Pray use your pleasure, Sir ; you seem to be
a gentleman.

Lyg. Thus, captain Bessus, thus ! Thus twinge
your nose, thus kick, thus tread upon you.

Bes. I do beseech you, yield your cause, Sir, quickly.

Lyg. Indeed, I should have told you that first.

Bes. I take it so.

1 Sw. Captain, he should, indeed ; he is mistaken.

Lyg. Sir, you shall have it quickly, and more
beating :

You

You have stol'n away a lady, captain Coward,
And such a one—— [Beats him.

Bef. Hold, I beseech you, hold, Sir;
I never yet stole any living thing
That had a tooth about it.

Lyg. I know you dare lye.

Bef. With none but summer-whores upon my life,
Sir :

My means and manners never could attempt
Above a hedge or haycock.

Lyg. Sirrah, that quits not me: Where is this
lady?

Do that you do not use to do, tell truth,
Or, by my hand, I'll beat your captain's brains out,
Wash 'em, and put 'em in again, that will I.

Bef. There was a lady, Sir, I must confess,
Once in my charge: The prince Tigranes gave her
To my guard, for her safety. How I us'd her
She may herself report; she's with the prince now.
I did but wait upon her like a groom,
Which she will testify, I'm sure: If not,
My brains are at your service, when you please, Sir,
And glad I have 'em for you.

Lyg. This is most likely. Sir, I ask you pardon,
And am sorry I was so intemperate.

Bef. Well, I can ask no more. You will think it
strange now, to have me beat you at first sight.

Lyg. Indeed, I would; but, I know, your good-
ness can forget twenty beatings: You must forgive
me.

Bef. Yes; there's my hand. Go where you will, I
shall think you a valiant fellow for all this.

Lyg. My daughter is a whore!
I feel it now too sensible; yet I will see her;
Discharge myself from being father to her,
And then back to my country, and there die:
Farewell, captain. [Exit Lyg.

Bef. Farewell, Sir, farewell! Commend me to the
gentlewoman, I pray.

280 A KING AND NO KING.

1 *Sw.* How now, captain? bear up, man.

Bef. Gentlemen o'th' sword, your hands once more; I have been kick'd again; but the foolish fellow is penitent, h'as ask'd me mercy, and my honour's safe.

2 *Sw.* We knew that, or the foolish fellow had better have kick'd his grandfire.

Bef. Confirm, confirm, I pray.

1 *Sw.* There be our hands again! Now let him come, and say he was not sorry, and he sleeps for it.

Bef. Alas! good ignorant old man, let him go, let him go, these courses will undo him. [*Exeunt.*]

Enter Lygones and Bacurius.

Bac. My lord, your authority is good, and I am glad it is so; for my consent would never hinder you from seeing your own king: I am a minister, but not a governor of this state. Yonder is your king; I'll leave you. [*Exit.*]

Enter Tigranes and Spaconia.

Lyg. There he is, indeed,
And with him my disloyal child.

Tygr. I do perceive my fault so much, that yet, Methinks, thou shouldst not have forgiven me.

Lyg. Health to your majesty!

Tygr. What, good Lygones! welcome! what business Brought thee hither?

Lyg. Several businesses:
My public business will appear by this;
I have a message to deliver, which
If it pleases you so to authorize, is
An embassy from th' Armenian state,
Unto Arbaces for your liberty.
The offer's there set down; please you to read it.

Tygr. There is no alteration happen'd since I came thence?

Lyg. None, Sir; all is as it was.

Tygr. And all our friends are well?

Lyg. All very well?

Spa.

A KING AND NO KING. 281

Spa. Though I have done nothing but what was good,

I dare not see my father: It was fault
Enough not to acquaint him with that good.

Lyg. Madam, I should have seen you.

Spa. Oh, good Sir, forgive me.

Lyg. Forgive you! why, I am no kin t'you, am I?

Spa. Should it be measur'd by my mean deserts,
Indeed, you are not.

Lyg. Thou couldst prate, unhappily,
Ere thou couldst go; 'would thou couldst do as well!
And how does your custom hold out here?

Spa. Sir?

Lyg. Are you in private still, or how?

Spa. What do you mean?

Lyg. Do you take money? Are you come to sell
sin yet? Perhaps, I can help you to liberal clients:
Or has not the king cast you off yet? Oh, thou vile
creature, whose best commendation is, that thou art
a young whore! I would thy mother had liv'd to see
this; or, rather, that I had died ere I had seen it!
Why didst not make me acquainted when thou wert
first resolv'd to be a whore?

I would have seen thy hot lust satisfied
More privately: I would have kept a dancer,
And a whole consort of musicians,
In my own house, only to fiddle thee.

Spa. Sir, I was never whore.

Lyg. If thou couldst not say so much for thyself,
thou shouldst be carted.

Tigr. Lygones, I have read it, and I like it;
You shall deliver it.

Lyg. Well, Sir, I will:
But I have private business with you.

Tigr. Speak; what is't?

Lyg. How has my age deserv'd so ill of you,
That you can pick no strumpets i' the land,
But out of my breed?

Tigr. Strumpets, good Lygones?

Lyg.

282 A KING AND NO KING.

Lyg. Yes; and I wish to have you know, I scorn
To get a whore for any prince alive:
And yet scorn will not help! Methinks, my daughter
Might have been spar'd; there were enow besides.

Tigr. May I not prosper but she's innocent
As morning light, for me; and, I dare swear,
For all the world.

Lyg. Why is she with you, then?
Can she wait on you better than your man?
Has she a gift in plucking off your stockings?
Can she make caudles well, or cut your corns?
Why do you keep her with you? For a queen,
I know, you do contemn her; so should I;
And every subject else think much at it.

Tigr. Let 'em think much; but 'tis more firm
than earth,
Thou see'st thy queen there.

Lyg. Then have I made a fair hand: I call'd
her whore. If I shall speak now as her father, I can-
not choose but greatly rejoice that she shall be a queen:
But if I shall speak to you as a statesman, she were
more fit to be your whore.

Tigr. Get you about your business to Arbaces;
Now you talk idly.

Lyg. Yes, Sir, I will go.
And shall she be a queen? She had more wit
Than her old father, when she ran away.
Shall she be queen? Now, by my troth, 'tis fine!
I'll dance out of all measure at her wedding:
Shall I not, Sir?

Tigr. Yes, marry, shalt thou.

Lyg. I'll make these withered kexes bear my body
Two hours together above ground.

Tigr. Nay, go;
My business requires haste.

Lyg. Good Heav'n preserve you!
You are an excellent king.

Spa. Farewell, good father.

Lyg. Farewell, sweet virtuous daughter.

I never

A KING AND NO KING. 283

I never was so joyful in all my life,
That I remember ! Shall she be a queen ?
Now I perceive a man may weep for joy ;
I had thought they had lyed that said so. [*Exit Lyg.*

Tigr. Come, my dear love.

Spa. But you may see another,
May alter that again.

Tig. Urge it no more :
I have made up a new strong constancy,
Not to be shook with eyes. I know I have
The passions of a man ; but if I meet
With any subject that should hold my eyes
More firmly than is fit, I'll think of thee,
And run away from it : Let that suffice. [*Exeunt.*

Enter Bacurius and his servant.

Bac. Three gentlemen without, to speak with me ?

Ser. Yes, Sir.

Bac. Let them come in.

Enter Bessus with the two Sword-men.

Ser. They are entered, Sir, already.

Bac. Now, fellows, your business ? Are these the gentlemen ?

Bes. My lord, I have made bold to bring these gentlemen, my friends o'th' sword, along with me.

Bac. I am afraid you'll fight, then.

Bes. My good lord, I will not ;
Your lordship is mistaken ; fear not, lord.

Bac. Sir, I am sorry for't.

Bes. I ask no more in honour. Gentlemen, you hear my lord is sorry.

Bac. Not that I have beaten you,
But beaten one that will be beaten ;
One whose dull body will require a laming,
As surfeits do the diet, spring and fall.
Now, to your sword-men :

What come they for, good captain Stockfish ?

Bes. It seems your lordship has forgot my name.

Bac.

284 A KING AND NO KING.

Bac. No, nor your nature neither ; though they are things fitter, I must confess, for any thing than my remembrance, or any honest man's : What shall these billets do ? be pil'd up in my wood-yard ?

Bef. Your lordship holds your mirth still, Heav'n continue it ! But, for these gentlemen, they come——

Bac. To swear you are a coward : Spare your book ; I do believe it.

Bef. Your lordship still draws wide ; they come to vouch, under their valiant hands, I am no coward.

Bac. That would be a show, indeed, worth seeing. Sirs, be wise and take money for this motion, travel with it ; and where the name of Bessus has been known, or a good coward stirring, 'twill yield more than a tilting. This will prove more beneficial to you, if you be thrifty, than your captainship, and more natural. Men of most valiant hands, is this true ?

2 Sw. It is so, most renowned.

Eac. 'Tis somewhat strange.

1 Sw. Lord, it is strange, yet true. We have examined, from your lordship's foot there to this man's head, the nature of the beatings ; and we do find his honour is come off clean and sufficient : This, as our swords shall help us.

Bac. You are much bound to your *bilbo* men ; I'm glad you're straight again, captain. 'Twere good you would think some way how to gratify them ; they have undergone a labour for you, Bessus, would have puzzled Hercules with all his valour.

2 Sw. Your lordship must understand we are no men o'th' law, that take pay for our opinions ; it is sufficient we have clear'd our friend.

Bac. Yet there is something due, which I, as touch'd in conscience, will discharge. Captain, I'll pay this rent for you.

Bef. Spare yourself, my good lord ; my brave friends aim at nothing but the virtue.

Bac. That's but a cold discharge, Sir, for the pains.

2 Sw. Oh, lord ! my good lord !

Eac.

A KING AND NO KING. 285

Bac. Be not so modest; I will give you something.

Bef. They shall dine with your lordship; that's sufficient.

Bac. Something in hand the while. You rogues, you apple-squires, do you come hither, with your bottled valour, your windy froth, to limit out my beatings?

1 *Sw.* I do beseech your lordship.

2 *Sw.* Oh, good lord!

Bac. 'Sfoot, what a bevy of beaten slaves are here! Get me a cudgel, Sirrah, and a tough one.

2 *Sw.* More of your foot, I do beseech your lordship.

Bac. You shall, you shall, dog, and your fellow beagle.

1 *Sw.* O' this side, good my lord.

Bac. Off with your swords; for if you hurt my foot, I'll have you flead, you rascals.

1 *Sw.* Mine's off, my lord.

2 *Sw.* I beseech your lordship, stay a little; my strap's tied to my cod-piece point: Now, when you please.

Bac. Captain, these are your valiant friends; you long for a little too?

Bef. I am very well, I humbly thank your lordship.

Eac. What's that in your pocket hurts my toe, you mungrel? Thy buttocks cannot be so hard; out with it quickly.

2 *Sw.* Here 'tis, Sir; a small piece of artillery, that a gentleman, a dear friend of your lordship's, sent me with, to get it mended, Sir; for, if you mark, the nose is somewhat loose.

Bac. A friend of mine, you rascal? I was never wearier of dothing nothing, than kicking these two foot-balls.

Enter Servant.

Ser. Here is a good cudgel, Sir.

Bac. It comes too late; I'm weary; prithee, do thou beat them.

2 *Sw.*

286 A KING AND NO KING:

2 Sw. My lord, this is foul play, i'faith, to put a fresh man upon us : Men are but men, Sir.

Bac. That jest shall save your bones. Captain, rally up your rotten regiment, and be gone. I had rather thresh than be bound to kick these rascals, 'till they cry'd, 'ho!' Bessus, you may put your hand to them now, and then you are quit. Farewell ! as you like this, pray visit me again ; 'twill keep me in good health. [Exit.

2 Sw. H'as a devilish hard foot ; I never felt the like.

1 Sw. Nor I ; and yet, I am sure, I have felt a hundred.

2 Sw. If he kick thus i' th' Dog-days, he will be dry-foundred. What cure now, captain, besides oil of bays ?

Bes. Why, well enough, I warrant you ; you can go.

2 Sw. Yes, Heav'n be thank'd ! but I feel a shrewd ache ; sure, he's sprang my huckle-bone.

1 Sw. I ha' lost a haunch.

Bes. A little butter, friend, a little butter ; butter and parley is a sovereign matter : *Probatum est.*

2 Sw. Captain, we must request your hand now to our honours.

Bes. Yes, marry, shall ye ; and then let all the world come, we are valiant to ourselves, and there's an end.

1 Sw. Nay, then, we must be valiant. Oh, my ribs !

2 Sw. Oh, my small guts ! a plague upon these sharp-toed shoes ; they are murderers ! [Exeunt.

Enter Arbaces, with his sword drawn.

Arb. It is resolv'd : I bare it whilst I could ;
I can no more. Hell, open all thy gates,
And I will thorough them : If they be shut,
I'll batter 'em, but I will find the place
Where the most damn'd have dwelling ! Ere I end,
Amongst them all they shall not have a sin,
But I may call it mine ! I must begin

Wi' th'

Wi' th' murder of my friend, and so go on
To that incestuous ravishing, and end
My life and sins with a forbidden blow
Upon myself !

Enter Mardonius.

Mar. What tragedy is near ?
That hand was never wont to draw a sword,
But it cry'd ' dead ' to something.

Arb. Mardonius,
Have you bid Gobrias come ?

Mar. How do you, Sir ?

Arb. Well. Is he coming ?

Mar. Why, Sir, are you thus ?
Why do your hands proclaim a lawless war
Against yourself ?

Arb. Thou answer'st me one question with another :
Is Gobrias coming ?

Mar. Sir, he is.

Arb. 'Tis well :

I can forbear your questions then. Be gone !

Mar. Sir, I have mark'd ——

Arb. Mark less ! it troubles you
And me.

Mar. You are more variable than you were.

Arb. It may be so.

Mar. To-day no hermit could be humbler
Than you were to us all.

Arb. And what of this ?

Mar. And now you take new rage into your eyes,
As you would look us all out of the land.

Arb. I do confess it ; will that satisfy ?
I prithee, get thee gone.

Mar. Sir, I will speak.

Arb. Will ye ?

Mar. It is my duty.

I fear you'll kill yourself : I am a subject,
And you shall do me wrong in't ; 'tis my cause,
And I may speak.

Arb.

288 A KING AND NO KING.

Arb. Thou art not train'd in sin,
It seems, Mardonius : Kill myself ! by Heav'n,
I will not do it yet ; and, when I will,
I'll tell thee, then I shall be such a creature,
That thou wilt give me leave without a word.
There is a method in man's wickedness ;
It grows up by degrees³⁹ : I am not come
So high as killing of myself ; there are
A hundred thousand sins 'twixt me and it,
Which I must do, and I shall come to't at last ;
But, take my oath, not now. Be satisfied,
And get thee hence.

Mar. I'm sorry 'tis so ill.

Arb. Be sorry, then⁴⁰ :
True sorrow is alone ; grieve by thyself.

Mar. I pray you, let me see your sword put up
Before I go : I'll leave you then.

Arb. Why, so. What folly is this in thee ? is it not
As apt to mischief as it was before ?
Can I not reach it, think'st thou ? These are toys
For children to be pleas'd with, and not men.
Now I am safe, you think : I would the Book
Of Fate were here ; my sword is not so sure
But I would get it out, and mangle that,
That all the destinies should quite forget
Their fix'd decrees, and haste to make us new,
Far other fortunes ; mine could not be worse.
Wilt thou now leave me ?

³⁹ *There is a method in man's wickedness,
It grows up by degrees.*] This thought is plainly borrow'd
from Juvenal's satires ; (as I had mark'd in the margin of my
book, and as Mr. Sympson likewise hinted to me)

Nemo repente fuit turpissimus. *Mr. Theobald.*

⁴⁰ *Be sorry then ; true sorrow is alone ;
Grieve by thyself.*] This reflection is as evidently shadow'd
out from one of Martial's epigrams.

Ille dolet verè, qui sine teste dolet.

This, if I remember right, was thus rendered by our facetious
Tom Brown.

That man grieves with a witness who grieves without one.

Mr. Theobald.

Mar.

A KING AND NO KING. 289

Mar. Heav'n put into your bosom temperate thoughts !

I'll leave you, though I fear.

[*Exit Mar.*

Arb. Go ; thou art honest.

Why should the hasty errors of my youth
Be so unpardonable to draw a sin,
Helpless, upon me ?

Enter Gobrias.

Gob. There is the king ; now it is ripe.

Arb. Draw near, thou guilty man⁴¹ ;
That art the author of the loathed'st crime
Five ages have brought forth, and hear me speak !
Curfes incurable, and all the evils
Man's body or his spirit can receive,
Be with thee !

Gob. Why, Sir, do you curse me thus ?

Arb. Why do I curse thee ? If there be a man
Subtle in curses, that exceeds the rest,
His worst wish on thee ! Thou hast broke my heart.

Gob. How, Sir ! Have I preserv'd you, from a
child,
From all the arrows malice or ambition
Could shoot at you, and have I this for pay ?

Arb. 'Tis true, thou didst preserve me, and in that
Wert crueller than hard'ned murderers
Of infants and their mothers ? Thou didst save me,

⁴¹ *Draw near, thou guilty man.*] The subsequent scenes, to the end of the play, have been, through the whole course of the impressions, delivered down to us as prose ; but I have restor'd them to their strict metre and versification : And through my whole edition (where the interpolations, or castrations, by the stage do not obstruct me in it, I shall endeavour to do our authors the same justice.

Mr. Theobald.

This is only a continuation of the daring falshood mentioned in p. 248 ; for, in the old copies, we find the lines run exactly the same as in Mr. Theobald's edition, except in two or three very trifling instances. It is remarkable, too, that that gentleman has introduced fewer of his arbitrary variations in this scene, than in almost any other part of the work.

290 A KING AND NO KING.

Only till thou hadst studied out a way
How to destroy me cunningly thyself :
This was a curious way of torturing.

Gob. What do you mean ?

Arb. Thou know'st the evils thou hast done to me !
Dost thou remember all those witching letters
Thou sent'st unto me to Armenia,
Fill'd with the praise of my beloved sister,
Where thou extol'dst her beauty ? What had I
To do with that ? what could her beauty be
To me ? And thou didst write how well she lov'd me !
Dost thou remember this ? so that I doted
Something before I saw her.

Gob. This is true.

Arb. Is it ? and, when I was return'd, thou know'st,
Thou didst pursue it, 'till thou wound'st me in
To such a strange and unbeliev'd affection,
As good men cannot think on.

Gob. This I grant ;
I think, I was the cause.

Arb. Wert thou ? Nay, more,
I think, thou meant'st it.

Gob. Sir, I hate a lye :
As I love Heav'n and honesty, I did ;
It was my meaning.

Arb. Be thine own sad judge ;
A further condemnation will not need :
Prepare thyself to die.

Gob. Why, Sir, to die ?

Arb. Why, shouldst thou live ? was ever yet of-
fender

So impudent, that had a thought of mercy,
After confession of a crime like this ?
Get out I cannot where thou hurl'dst me in ;
But I can take revenge ; that's all the sweetness
Left for me.

Gob. Now's the time. Hear me but speak.

Arb. No ! Yet I will be far more merciful
Than thou wert to me ; thou didst steal into me,
And

A KING AND NO KING. 291

And never gav'st me warning : So much time
As I give thee now, had prevented me
For ever. Notwithstanding all thy sins,
If thou hast hope that there is yet a prayer
To save thee, turn and speak it to thyself.

Gob. Sir, you shall know your sins, before you do
'em :

If you kill me——

Arb. I will not stay then.

Gob. Know—you kill your father.

Arb. How ?

Gob. You kill your father.

Arb. My father ? Though I know it for a lye,
Made out of fear, to save thy stained life,
The very rev'rence of the word comes cross me,
And ties mine arm down.

Gob. I will tell you that shall heighten you again ;
I am thy father ; I charge thee hear me.

Arb. If it should be so,
As 'tis most false, and that I should be found
A bastard issue, the despised fruit
Of lawless lust, I should no more admire
All my wild passions ! But another truth
Shall be wrung from thee : If I could come by
The spirit of pain, it should be pour'd on thee,
'Till thou allow'st thyself more full of lyes
Than he that teaches thee.

Enter Arane.

Ara. Turn thee about ;
I come to speak to thee, thou wicked man !
Hear me, thou tyrant !

Arb. I will turn to thee ;
Hear me, thou strumpet ! I have blotted out
The name of mother, as thou hast thy shame.

Ara. My shame ! Thou hast less shame than any
thing !

Why dost thou keep my daughter in a prison ?
Why dost thou call her sister, and do this ?

Arb. Cease, thou strange impudence, and answer quickly!

If thou contemn'st me, this will ask an answer,
And have it.

Ara. Help me, gentle Gobrias.

Arb. Guilt dare not help guilt; though they grow together

In doing ill, yet at the punishment
They sever, and each flies the noise of other.
Think not of help; answer!

Ara. I will; to what?

Arb. To such a thing, as, if it be a truth,
Think what a creature thou hast made thyself,
That didst not shame to do what I must blush
Only to ask thee. Tell me who I am,
Whose son I am, without all circumstance;
Be thou as hasty as my sword will be,
If thou refusest.

Ara. Why, you are his son.

Arb. His son? Swear, swear, thou worse than woman damn'd!

Ara. By all that's good, you are.

Arb. Then art thou all

That ever was known bad! Now is the cause
Of all my strange misfortunes come to light.
What reverence expect'st thou from a child,
To bring forth which thou hast offended Heav'n,
Thy husband, and the land? Adulterous witch!
I know now why thou wouldst have poison'd me:
I was thy lust, which thou wouldst have forgot!
Then, wicked mother of my sins, and me,
Shew me the way to the inheritance
I have by thee; which is a spacious world
Of impious acts, that I may soon possess it.
Plagues rot thee, as thou liv'st, and such diseases
As use to pay lust, recompence thy deed!

Gob. You do not know why you curse thus.

Arb. Too well.

You are a pair of vipers; and behold

The

The serpent you have got! There is no beast,
But, if he knew it, has a pedigree
As brave as mine, for they have more descents;
And I am every way as beastly got,
As far without the compass of a law,
As they.

Ara. You spend your rage and words in vain,
And rail upon a guess; hear us a little.

Arb. No, I will never hear, but talk away
My breath, and die.

Gob. Why, but you are no bastard.

Arb. How's that?

Ara. Nor child of mine.

Arb. Still you go on
In wonders to me.

Gob. Pray you, be more patient;
I may bring comfort to you.

Arb. I will kneel,
And hear with the obedience of a child.
Good father, speak! I do acknowledge you,
So you bring comfort.

Gob. First know, our last king, your supposed father,
Was old and feeble when he married her,
And almost all the land, as she, past hope
Of issue from him.

Arb. Therefore she took leave
To play the whore, because the king was old:
Is this the comfort?

Ara. What will you find out
To give me satisfaction, when you find
How you have injur'd me? Let fire consume me
If ever I were whore!

Gob. Forbear these starts,
Or I will leave you wedded to despair,
As you are now: If you can find a temper,
My breath shall be a pleasant western wind
That cools and blasts not.

Arb. Bring it out, good father.
I'll lie, and listen here as reverently
As to an angel: If I breathe too loud,

294 A KING AND NO KING.

Tell me ; for I would be as still as night.

Gob. Our king, I say, was old, and this our queen
Desir'd to bring an heir, but yet her husband,
She thought, was past it ; and to be dishonest,
I think, she would not : If she would have been,
The truth is, she was watch'd so narrowly,
And had so slender opportunities,
She hardly could have been : But yet her cunning
Found out this way ; she feign'd herself with child,
And posts were sent in haste throughout the land,
And God was humbly thank'd in ev'ry church,
That so had bless'd the queen ; and prayers were
made

For her safe going and delivery.

She feign'd now to grow bigger ; and perceiv'd
This hope of issue made her fear'd, and brought
A far more large respect from every man,
And saw her pow'r encrease, and was resolv'd,
Since she believ'd she could not have't indeed,
At least she would be thought to have a child.

Arb. Do I not hear it well ? Nay, I will make
No noise at all ; but pray you to the point,
Quick as you can.

Gob. Now when the time was full
She should be brought to bed, I had a son
Born, which was you : This, the queen hearing of,
Mov'd me to let her have you ; and such reasons
She shewed me, as she knew well would tie
My secrecy : She swore you should be king ;
And, to be short, I did deliver you
Unto her, and pretended you were dead,
And in mine own house kept a funeral,
And had an empty coffin put in earth.
That night this queen feign'd hastily to labour,
And by a pair of women of her own,
Which she had charm'd, she made the world believe
She was deliver'd of you. You grew up,
As the king's son, till you were six years old ;
Then did the king die, and did leave to me

Protection

Protection of the realm ; and, contrary,
 To his own expectation, left this queen
 Truly with child, indeed, of the fair princess
 Panthea. Then she could have torn her hair,
 And did alone to me, yet durst not speak
 In public, for she knew she should be found
 A traitor ; and her tale would have been thought
 Madness, or any thing rather than truth.
 This was the only cause why she did seek
 To poison you, and I to keep you safe ;
 And this the reason why I sought to kindle
 Some sparks of love in you to fair Panthea,
 That she might get part of her right again.

Arb. And have you made an end now ? Is this all ?
 If not, I will be still till I be aged,
 Till all my hairs be silver.

Gob. This is all.

Arb. And is it true, say you too, madam ?

Ara. Yes, Heaven knows, it is most true.

Arb. Panthea, then, is not my sister.

Gob. No.

Ara. But can you prove this ?

Gob. If you'll give consent,
 Else who dares go about it ?

Arb. Give consent ?

Why, I will have 'em all that know it rack'd
 To get this from 'em. All that wait without,
 Come in, whate'er you be, come in, and be
 Partakers of my joy ! Oh, you are welcome !

Enter Bessus, gentlemen, Mardonius, and other attendants.

Mardonius, the best news ! Nay, draw no nearer ;
 They all shall hear it : I am found No King.

Mar. Is that so good news ?

Arb. Yes, the happiest news
 That e'er was heard.

Mar. Indeed, 'twere well for you
 If you might be a little less obey'd.

Arb. One call the queen.

Mar. Why, she is there.

Arb. The queen,
Mardonius? Panthea is the queen,
And I am plain Arbaces. Go, some one!
She is in Gobrias' house. Since I saw you,
There are a thousand things deliver'd to me,
You little dream of. *[Exit a gentleman.]*

Mar. So it should seem. My lord,
What fury's this?

Gob. Believe me, 'tis no fury;
All that he says is truth.

Mar. 'Tis very strange.

Arb. Why do you keep your hats off, gentlemen?
Is it to me? I swear, it must not be;
Nay, trust me, in good faith, it must not be!
I cannot now command you; but I pray you,
For the respect you bare me when you took
Me for your king, each man clap on his hat
At my desire.

Mar. We will. You are not found
So mean a man, but that you may be cover'd
As well as we; may you not?

Arb. Oh, not here!
You may, but not I, for here is my father
In presence.

Mar. Where?

Arb. Why, there. Oh, the whole story
Would be a wilderness, to lose thyself
For ever. Oh, pardon me, dear father,
For all the idle and unreverend words
That I have spoke in idle moods to you!
I am Arbaces; we all fellow-subjects;
Nor is the queen Panthea now my sister.

Bes. Why, if you remember, fellow-subject Arbaces,
I told you once she was not your sister: Ay, and
she look'd nothing like you.

Arb. I think you did, good captain Bessius.

Bes.

A KING AND NO KING. 297

Bef. Here will arise another question now amongst the sword-men, whether I be to call him to account for beating me, now he is prov'd No King.

Enter Lygones.

Mar. Sir, here's Lygones, the agent for the Armenian state.

Arb. Where is he? I know your business, good Lygones.

Lyg. We must have our king again, and will.

Arb. I knew that was your business: You shall have

Your king again; and have him so again,
As never king was had. Go; one of you,
And bid Bacurius bring Tigranes hither;
And bring the lady with him, that Panthea,
The queen Panthea, sent me word this morning
Was brave Tigranes' mistress. [*Ex. two gentlemen.*

Lyg. 'Tis Spaconia.

Arb. Ay, ay, Spaconia.

Lyg. She is my daughter.

Arb. She is so. I could now tell any thing
I never heard. Your king shall go so home,
As never man went.

Mar. Shall he go on's head?

Arb. He shall have chariots easier than air,
That I will have invented; and ne'er think
He shall pay any ransom! And thyself,
That art the messenger, shall ride before him
On a horse cut out of an entire diamond,
That shall be made to go with golden wheels,
I know not how yet.

Lyg. Why, I shall be made
For ever! They bely'd this king with us,
And said he was unkind.

Arb. And then, thy daughter;
She shall have some strange thing; we'll have the
kingdom
Sold utterly, and put into a toy,

Which

298 A KING AND NO KING.

Which she shall wear about her carelessly,
Somewhere or other. See, the virtuous queen!
Behold the humblest subject that you have,
Kneel here before you.

Enter Panthea and 1 gentleman.

Pan. Why kneel you to me,
That am your vassal?

Arb. Grant me one request.

Pan. Alas! what can I grant you? what I can
I will.

Arb. That you will please to marry me,
If I can prove it lawful.

Pan. Is that all?
More willingly than I would draw this air.

Arb. I'll kiss this hand, in earnest.

2 Gent. Sir, Tigranes
Is coming; though he made it strange, at first,
To see the princess any more.

Enter Tigranes and Spaconia.

Arb. The queen,
Thou mean'st. Oh, my Tigranes, pardon me!
Tread on my neck; I freely offer it;
And, if thou be'st so given, take revenge,
For I have injur'd thee.

Tigr. No; I forgive,
And rejoice more that you have found repentance,
Than I my liberty.

Arb. May'st thou be happy
In thy fair choice, for thou art temperate!
You owe no ransom to the state! Know, that
I have a thousand joys to tell you of,
Which yet I dare not utter, till I pay
My thanks to Heav'n for 'em. Will you go
With me, and help me? pray you, do.

Tigr. I will.

Arb.

A KING AND NO KING. 299

Arb. Take then your fair one with you : And you,
queen

Of goodness and of us, oh, give me leave
To take your arm in mine ! Come, every one
That takes delight in goodness, help to sing
Loud thanks for me, that I am prov'd No King !

[*Exeunt omnes.*]

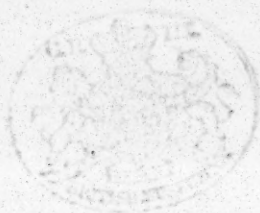
THE following observations are made by Mr. Seward, respecting this Play.

‘ Mr. Rhymer flings the most virulent of all his invectives against Othello and Arbaces, falsely deeming all the faults of those characters to be so many charges against the Poets ; whereas their intent was not to paint *perfection* but *human nature*, to blend the *virtues* and *vices* together, so that both may spring from the same *temper*, and, like *handsome* and *ill-favour'd children*, both still bear a *resemblance* to their *fire*. To do this well is one of the highest efforts of poetry. Arbaces, like his great pattern Achilles, has *virtues* and *vices* in the extreme. His *violence* makes us expect some dreadful effect, and it therefore soon hurries him into an attempt to commit *incest*. He is to raise *terror* and *anger*, not *pity* and *love* ; and Mr. Rhymer having the same *choler* in his *temper*, ridiculously took fire, and furiously attack'd his *own shadow*.’

The savage jealousy of the Moor is so finely delineated, that the tragedy of Othello, notwithstanding some slight defects in the construction of the fable, must for ever excite the admiration of all true lovers of dramatic poetry. The spleen of Rhymer is almost as ineffectually vented on this Tragedy of our Authors : Yet Candor and Justice oblige us to confess, that the sudden transition of passions in the character of Arbaces sometimes borders on the ridiculous. The picture is, however, in the main, faithfully copied from nature, with many touches of peculiar excellence, particularly the agitations of Arbaces, during his conflict with a supposed incestuous passion. His reverential fear of Mardonius, and his contempt of Eësus, while he is severally soliciting them, are finely imagined, and as finely executed. The Arbaces of our Authors is evidently the model on which Lee formed his Alexander, as well as his Clytus on Mardonius. It would, perhaps, require a nice hand to make this play thoroughly relished by a modern audience ; yet it most certainly abounds with the highest dramatic excellencies, and deserves an eminent rank in the list of theatrical productions.

THE







THE
SCORNFUL LADY.

A COMEDY.

The Commendatory Verses by Waller and Stanley speak of Fletcher as the Author of this Comedy ; in the titles of the old copies we find the names of both our Authors, and it is supposed to have been their joint production. We do not find that it was ever altered ; nor has it been performed in the course of many years past ; though, in the lifetime of Mrs. Oldfield, who acted the Lady, it used to be frequently represented.

DRAMATIS

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

M E N.

Elder Loveless, *a suitor to the Lady.*

Young Loveless, *a prodigal.*

Savil, *steward to Elder Loveless.*

Welford, *a suitor to the Lady.*

Sir Roger, *curate to the Lady.*

A Captain,

A Traveller,

A Poet,

A Tobacco-man,

Morecraft, *an usurer.*

} *hangers-on to Young Loveless.*

W O M E N.

Lady, }
Martha, } *two sisters.*

Younglove, *or Abigail, a waiting gentlewoman.*

A rich Widow.

Wenches, fiddlers, and attendants.

SCENE, L O N D O N.

T H E

T H E
S C O R N F U L L A D Y .

A C T I .

Enter Elder Loveless, Young Loveless, Savil, and a page.

Elder Loveless. **B**ROTHER, is your last hope
past, to mollify Morecraft's heart
about your mortgage?

Young Loveless. Hopelessly past. I have presented
the usurer with a richer draught than ever Cleopatra
swallow'd; he hath suck'd in ten thousand pounds
worth of my land more than he paid for, at a gulp,
without trumpets¹.

El. Lo. I have as hard a task to perform in this
house.

Yo. Lo. Faith, mine was to make an usurer honest,
or to lose my land.

El. Lo. And mine is to persuade a passionate
woman, or to leave the land.

¹ *At a gulp, without trumpets.]* The allusion is here either to the
drinking of healths at our public halls and city entertainments; or else
to a passage in the *Acharnenses* of Aristophanes, upon which the old
Scholiast informs us, that it was a custom in Athens, at certain of
their feasts, to challenge one another to drink by sound of trumpet.

Mr. Theobald.

Yo. Lo.

304 THE SCORNFUL LADY.

Yo. Lo. Make the boat stay².

El. Lo. I fear I shall begin my unfortunate journey this night; though the darkness of the night, and the roughness of the waters, might easily dissuade an unwilling man.

Savil. Sir, your father's old friends hold it the sounder course for your body and estate to stay at home and marry, and propagate, and govern in your country, than to travel and die without issue.

El. Lo. Savil, you shall gain the opinion of a better servant, in seeking to execute, not alter, my will, howsoever my intents succeed.

Yo. Lo. Yonder's mistress Younglove, brother, the grave rubber of your mistress's toes.

Enter Younglove, or Abigail.

El. Lo. Mistress Younglove——

Abig. Master Loveless, truly we thought your sails had been hoist: My mistress is persuaded you are sea-sick ere this.

El. Lo. Loves she her ill-taken-up resolution so dearly? Didst thou move her from me?

Abig. By this light that shines, there's no removing her, if she get a stiff opinion by the end. I attempted

² *And mine is to persuade, &c.*] The majority of the old quarto's thus divide this speech:

————— *or to leave the land.*

Yo. Lo. Make the boat stay; I fear I shall, &c.

which is certainly erroneous. The modern editions make no division, but give the whole to the Elder Loveless; which seems equally improper. We apprehend the original reading to have been,

————— *or to leave the land.*

Yo. Lo. Make the boat stay.

El. Lo. I fear I shall begin, &c.

i. e. After the Elder Loveless declares, that, if he cannot persuade the Lady to remit the duty she had imposed on him in her passion, he must undergo the disagreeable task of quitting the land; the Younger jocularly replies, 'Make the boat stay;' *be not hasty, postpone your departure.* The Elder then rejoins, 'I fear I shall begin my journey this night.'

her

THE SCORNFUL LADY. 305

her to-day, when, they say, a woman can deny nothing.

El. Lo. What critical minute was that?

Abig. When her smock was over her ears; but she was no more pliant than if it hung above her heels.

El. Lo. I prithee deliver my service, and say, I desire to see the dear cause of my banishment; and then for France.

Abig. I'll do't. Hark hither, is that your brother?

El. Lo. Yes; have you lost your memory?

Abig. As I live he's a pretty fellow. [Exit.

Yo. Lo. Oh, this is a sweet brach³.

El. Lo. Why she knows not you.

Yo. Lo. No, but she offer'd me once to know her. To this day she loves youth of eighteen. She heard a tale how Cupid struck her in love with a great lord in the Tilt-yard, but he never saw her; yet she in kindness would needs wear a willow-garland at his wedding. She lov'd all the players in the last queen's time once over; she was struck when they acted lovers, and forsook some when they play'd murderers. She has nine spur-royals⁴, and the servants say she hoards old gold; and she herself pronounces angerly, that the farmer's eldest son (or her mistress's husband's clerk shall be) that marries her, shall make her a jointure of fourscore pounds a-year. She tells tales of the serving-men——

El. Lo. Enough, I know her. Brother, I shall entreat you only to salute my mistress and take leave; we'll part at the stairs.

Enter Lady and waiting-woman.

Lady. Now, Sir, this first part of your will is perform'd: What's the rest?

³ O, *this is a sweet brache!*] A sort of hound, or any little stinking, household cur. *Mr. Theobald.*

Brach is used by Shakespeare to signify a bitch-hound.

⁴ *She has nine spur-ryals.*] This was a piece of gold coin, very current in the reign of king James I. *Mr. Theobald.*

306 THE SCORNFUL LADY.

El. Lo. First, let me beg your notice for this gentleman, my brother.

Lady. I shall take it as a favour done to me. Tho' the gentleman hath receiv'd but an untimely grace from you, yet my charitable disposition would have been ready to have done him freer courtesies as a stranger, than upon those cold commendations.

Yo. Lo. Lady, my salutations crave acquaintance and leave at once.

Lady. Sir, I hope you are the master of your own occasions. [*Ex. Yo. Lo. and Savil.*]

El. Lo. 'Would I were so. Mistrefs, for me to praise over again that worth, which all the world, and you yourself can see——

Lady. It's a cold room this, servant.

El. Lo. Mistrefs——

Lady. What think you if I have a chimney for't, out here?

El. Lo. Mistrefs, another in my place, that were not ty'd to believe all your actions just, would apprehend himself wrong'd: But I, whose virtues are constancy and obedience——

Lady. Younglove, make a good fire above, to warm me after my servant's exordiums.

El. Lo. I have heard and seen your affability to be such, that the servants you give wages to may speak.

Lady. 'Tis true, 'tis true; but they speak to th' purpose.

El. Lo. Mistrefs, your will leads my speeches from the purpose. But, as a man——

Lady. A simile, servant! This room was built for honest meaners, that deliver themselves hastily and plainly, and are gone. Is this a time or place for exordiums, and similies, and metaphors? If you have ought to say, break into't: My answers shall very reasonably meet you.

El. Lo. Mistrefs, I came to see you.

Lady. That's happily dispatch'd; the next.

El. Lo. To take leave of you.

Lady.

THE SCORNFUL LADY. 307

Lady. To be gone?

El. Lo. Yes.

Lady. You need not have despair'd of that, nor have us'd so many circumstances to win me to give you leave to perform my command. Is there a third?

El. Lo. Yes; I had a third, had you been apt to hear it.

Lady. I? never apter. Fast, good servant, fast!

El. Lo. 'Twas to entreat you to hear reason.

Lady. Most willingly; have you brought one can speak it?

El. Lo. Lastly, it is to kindle in that barren heart love and forgiveness.

Lady. You would stay at home?

El. Lo. Yes, lady.

Lady. Why, you may, and doubtless will, when you have debated that your commander is but your mistress, a woman, a weak one, wildly overborn with passions: But the thing by her commanded is, to see Dover's dreadful Cliff, passing in a poor water-house; the dangers of the merciless Channel 'twixt that and Calais, five long hours' sail, with three poor weeks' victuals⁵.

El. Lo. You wrong me.

Lady. Then, to land dumb, unable to enquire for an English host, to remove from city to city, by most chargeable post-horse, like one that rode in quest of his mother tongue.

El. Lo. You wrong me much.

Lady. And all these (almost invincible) labours

⁵ *Five long hours' sail, with three poor weeks' victuals.*] This speech is all through farcical. She is bantering her gallant on the supposed danger of his voyage; and the great care he is taking of himself, in laying in three weeks provisions only to cross from Dover to Calais.

Mr. Theobald.

Where the apprehensive Mr. Theobald acquired information of Loveless having laid in three weeks' provision is unknown to us. Had he not informed us this was the case, we should have supposed the farcism levelled at the generality of *puny* travellers, not singly at Loveless.

308 THE SCORNFUL LADY.

perform'd for your mistress, to be in danger to forsake her, and to put on new allegiance to some French lady, who is content to change language with your laughter; and, after your whole year spent in tennis and broken speech, to stand to the hazard of being laugh'd at, at your return, and have tales made on you by the chambermaids.

El. Lo. You wrong me much.

Lady. Louder yet.

El. Lo. You know your least word is of force to make me seek out dangers; move me not with toys. But, in this banishment, I must take leave to say, you are unjust: Was one kiss forc'd from you in public by me so unpardonable? Why, all the hours of day and night have seen us kisses.

Lady. 'Tis true, and so you told the company that heard me chide.

El. Lo. Your own eyes were not dearer to you than I.

Lady. And so you told 'em.

El. Lo. I did; yet no sign of disgrace need to have stain'd your cheek: You yourself knew your pure and simple heart to be most unspotted, and free from the least baseness.

Lady. I did: But if a maid's heart doth but once think that she is suspected, her own face will write her guilty.

El. Lo. But where lay this disgrace? the world, that knew us, knew our resolutions well: And could it be hop'd, that I should give away my freedom, and venture a perpetual bondage with one I never kiss'd? or could I in strict wisdom take too much love upon me, from her that chose me for her husband?

Lady. Believe me, if my wedding-smock were on; Were the gloves bought and giv'n, the licence come; Were the rosemary-branches dipp'd, and all The hippocras⁶ and cakes eat and drank off;

Were

⁶ *Hippocras.*] This was a wine spiced and strain'd thro' a flannel bag, formerly in much request at weddings, wakes, &c. The strainer,

THE SCORNFUL LADY. 309

Were these two arms encompass'd with the hands
Of batchelors, to lead me to the church ;
Were my feet in the door ; were ' I John ' said ;
If John should boast a favour done by me,
I would not wed that year. And you, I hope,
When you have spent this year commodiously,
In atchieving languages, will at your return
Acknowledge me more coy of parting with mine eyes,
Than such a friend. More talk I hold not now.
If you dare go——

El. Lo. I dare, you know. First, let me kiss.

Lady. Farewell, sweet servant. Your task perform'd,
On a new ground, as a beginning suitor,
I shall be apt to hear you.

El. Lo. Farewell, cruel mistress ! [Exit Lady.

Enter Young Loveless and Savil.

Yo. Lo. Brother, you'll hazard the losing your tide
to Gravesend ; you have a long half-mile by land to
Greenwich.

El. Lo. I go. But, brother, what yet-unheard-of
course to live doth your imagination flatter you with ?
Your ordinary means are devour'd.

Yo. Lo. Course ? why horse-courfing, I think. Con-
sume no time in this ; I have no estate to be mended
by meditation : He that busies himself about my for-
tunes, may properly be said to busy himself about
nothing.

El. Lo. Yet some course you must take, which, for
my satisfaction, resolve and open. If you will shape
none, I must inform you, that that man but persuades
himself he means to live, that imagines not the means.

Yo. Lo. Why, live upon others, as others have liv'd
upon me.

El. Lo. I apprehend not that : You have fed others,

strainer, we are told, was call'd Hippocrates's sleeve. I know, there
is a woollen bag, so call'd, used by the apothecaries to strain syrups
and decoctions for clarification.

Mr. Theobald.

310 THE SCORNFUL LADY.

and consequently dispos'd of 'em; and the same measure must you expect from your maintainers; which will be too heavy an alteration for you to bear.

Yo. Lo. Why, I'll purse; if that raise me not, I'll bett at bowling-alleys, or man whores⁷: I would fain live by others. But I'll live whilst I am unhang'd, and, after, the thought's taken.

El. Lo. I see you are ty'd to no particular employment, then?

Yo. Lo. Faith, I may chuse my course: They say, nature brings forth none but she provides for them: I'll try her liberality.

El. Lo. Well, to keep your feet out of base and dangerous paths, I have resolv'd you shall live as master of my house. It shall be your care, Savil, to see him fed and cloath'd, not according to his present estate, but to his birth and former fortunes.

Yo. Lo. If it be referr'd to him, if I be not found in carnation Jersey stockings, blue devils' breeches, with the guards down, and my pocket i' th' sleeves, I'll ne'er look you i' th' face again.

Sav. A comelier wear, I wis, it is than those dangling floss.

El. Lo. To keep you ready to do him all service

⁷ *Why, I'll purse; if that raise me not, I'll bett at bowling-alleys, or man whores.] i. e. I'll take a purse upon the road, or turn bully and stallion to a bawdy-house.*

Mr. Theobald.

The Authors here allude to three of the most despicable modes of acquiring subsistence to which mankind can be reduced: To be a robber, a gambler, and an attendant of strumpets; for such is the meaning of *man whores*, and not to be a stallion, as Mr. Theobald supposes.

This expression is used by Osborn, in his Advice to his Son, in the following manner.

' Carry no dogs to court, or any public place, to avoid contests
' with such as may spurn, or endeavour to take them up: The same
' may be said of boys not wise or strong enough to decline or re-
' venge affronts, whose complaints do not seldom engage their masters;
' as I knew one of quality killed in the defence of his page: The
' like danger attends such as are so indiscrete, as to *man whores* in
' the street, in which every one pretends to have an interest for his
' money, and therefore unwilling to see them monopolized, especially
' when they have got a pot in their pate.'

peaceably,

THE SCORNFUL LADY. 311

peaceably, and him to command you reasonably, I leave these further directions in writing; which, at your best leisure, together open and read.

Enter Abigail to them, with a jewel.

Abig. Sir, my mistress commends her love to you in this token, and these words: It is a jewel, she says, which, as a favour from her, she would request you to wear till your year's travel be perform'd; which, once expir'd, she will hastily expect your happy return⁸.

El. Lo. Return my service, with such thanks as she may imagine the heart of a suddenly-over-joy'd man would willingly utter: And you, I hope, I shall with slender arguments persuade to wear this diamond; that when my mistress shall, through my long absence, and the approach of new suitors, offer to forget me, you may call your eye down to your finger, and remember and speak of me: She will hear thee better than those allied by birth to her; as we see many men much sway'd by the grooms of their chambers; not that they have a greater part of their love or opinion of them, than on others, but for they know their secrets.

Abig. O' my credit, I swear I think 'twas made for me: Fear no other suitors.

El. Lo. I shall not need to teach you how to discredit their beginning: You know how to take exception at their shirts at washing; or to make the maids swear they found plaisters in their beds.

Abig. I know, I know; and do you not fear the suitors.

El. Lo. Farewell; be mindful, and be happy; the night calls me.

[*Exeunt omnes præter Abig.*

⁸ *She will hastily expect your happy return.*] All the editions, from that of 1639, downwards, erroneously read *happily* for *hastily*; notwithstanding the great difference in the sense. The one word implying, she will be quite easy and contented about your return; the other, she will be impatient for it; in which way we are to understand the passage, as appears by several of the Lady's own speeches.

312 THE SCORNFUL LADY.

Abig. The gods of the winds befriend you, Sir! A constant and liberal lover thou art; more such God send us!

Enter Welford.

Wel. Let 'em not stand still, we have rid hard⁹.

Abig. A suitor, I know, by his riding hard; I'll not be seen.

Wel. A pretty hall this: No servant in't? I would look freshly.

Abig. You have deliver'd your errand to me, then. There's no danger in a handsome young fellow: I'll shew myself.

Wel. Lady, may it please you to bestow upon a stranger the ordinary grace of salutation? Are you the lady of this house?

Abig. Sir, I am worthily proud to be a servant of hers.

Wel. Lady, I should be as proud to be a servant of yours, did not my so-late acquaintance make me despair.

Abig. Sir, it is not so hard to atchieve, but nature may bring it about.

Wel. For these comfortable words, I remain your glad debtor. Is your lady at home?

Abig. She is no straggler, Sir.

Wel. May her occasions admit me to speak with her?

Abig. If you come in the way of a suitor, no.

Wel. I know your affable virtue will be mov'd to persuade her, that a gentleman, benighted and stray'd, offers to be bound to her for a night's lodging.

Abig. I will commend this message to her; but if you aim at her body, you will be deluded. ¹⁰ Other women

⁹ *Let 'em not stand still, we have rid*] Mr. Seward prescribes the insertion of the word *hard*, which, probably has been dropp'd at the press, and seems necessary to the sense.

¹⁰ *Other women of the households, of as good carriage and government.*] Mr. Symphon reads, *There are other women of the household* of

THE SCORNFUL LADY. 313

women of the households', of good carriage and government; upon any of which if you can cast your affection, they will perhaps be found as faithful, and not so coy. [Exit Abig.]

Wel. What a skinfull of lust is this? I thought I had come a-wooing, and I am the courted party. This is right court-fashion; men, women, and all woo; catch that catch may. If this soft-hearted woman have infus'd any of her tenderness into her lady, there is hope she will be pliant. But who's here?

Enter Sir Roger.

Rog. God save you, Sir! My lady lets you know, she desires to be acquainted with your name, before she confer with you?

Wel. Sir, my name calls me Welford.

Rog. Sir, you are a gentleman of a good name, I'll try his wit.

Wel. I will uphold it as good as any of my ancestors had this two hundred years, Sir.

Rog. I knew a worshipful and a religious gentleman of your name in the bishopric of Durham: Call you him cousin?

Wel. I am only allied to his virtues, Sir.

Rog. It is modestly said. I should carry the badge of your Christianity with me too.

Wel. What's that? a cross? There's a tester.

Rog. I mean, the name which your godfathers and godmothers gave you at the font.

Wel. 'Tis Harry. But you cannot proceed orderly now in your catechism; for you have told me who gave me that name. Shall I beg your name?

of as good carriage, &c. We have not ventured to deviate from the old copies, thinking the sense not imperfect. She means, 'Tho' you cannot have my mistress's *person*, you may find *other* women of the household, upon any of which, &c.' It may be urged, that, without Mr. Symphon's words, *there are*, the expression is quaint; but that is, perhaps, rather an argument for than against its having been used by our Poets.

Rog.

314 THE SCORNFUL LADY.

Rog. Roger.

Wel. What room fill you in this house?

Rog. More rooms than one.

Wel. The more the merrier: But may my boldness know, why your lady hath sent you to decypher my name?

Rog. Her own words were these: To know whether you were a formerly-deny'd suitor, disguis'd in this message; for I can assure you, she delights not in *Thalamô*¹¹; Hymen and she are at variance. I shall return with much haste. [Exit Roger.]

Wel. And much speed, Sir, I hope. Certainly, I am arrived amongst a nation of new-found fools, on a land where no navigator has yet planted wit. If I had foreseen it, I would have laded my breeches with bells, knives, copper, and glasses, to trade with women for their virginities; yet, I fear, I should have betray'd myself to needless charge, then. Here's the walking night-cap again.

Enter Roger.

Rog. Sir, my lady's pleasure is to see you; who hath commanded me to acknowledge her sorrow, that you must take the pains to come up for so bad entertainment.

Wel. I shall obey your lady that sent it, and acknowledge you that brought it to be your art's master.

Rog. I am but a batchelor of arts, Sir; and I have the mending of all under this roof, from my lady on her down bed, to the maid in the pease-straw.

Wel. A cobler, Sir?

Rog. No, Sir; I inculcate divine service within these walls¹².

Wel.

¹¹ *She delights not in Thalamé:] It must be, as I had long ago observ'd, and as Mr. Symphon likewise hinted to me, in Thalamô: She has no taste for wedlock, for the marriage-bed. Mr. Theobald.*

¹² *No Sir, I inculcate divine service within these walls.] Several of the old quarto's have it, homilies; either word is equally to the purpose,*

THE SCORNFUL LADY. 315

Wel. But the inhabitants of this house do often employ you on errands, without any scruple of conscience.

Rog. Yes, I do take the air many mornings on foot, three or four miles, for eggs: But why move you that?

Wel. To know whether it might become your function, to bid my man to neglect his horse a little, to attend on me.

Rog. Most properly, Sir.

Wel. I pray you do so then; and, whilst, I will attend your lady. You direct all this house in the true way?

Rog. I do, Sir.

Wel. And this door, I hope, conducts to your lady?

Rog. Your understanding is ingenious.

[*Exeunt severally.*]

Enter Young Loveless and Savil, with a writing.

Sav. By your favour, Sir, you shall pardon me.

Yo. Lo. I shall beat your favour, Sir¹³! Cross me no more! I say, they shall come in.

Sav. Sir, you forget, then, who I am?

Yo. Lo. Sir, I do not; thou art my brother's steward, his cast-off mill-money, his kitchen arithmetic.

Sav. Sir, I hope, you will not make so little of me?

purpose, but the latter being the stiffer and more precise term, seems most suitable to Sir Roger's formal character. So Abigail, at the beginning of the fourth act, speaking of him, says;

To this good homilist I've been ever stubborn;

Sir Roger is a very good picture of a dull, pedantic country-chaplain, of those times, in a private family. *Mr. Theobald.*

The oldest editions, however, reading *service*, we have chose to insert that word.

¹³ *I shall bear your favour, Sir, cross me no more.*] There is neither sense nor humour, in Young Loveless's reply, as it stands in all the copies. My correction retrieves both: *i. e.* If you continue to cross me, I shall correct you for your stubbornness. *Mr. Theobald.*

Yo. Lo.

316 THE SCORNFUL LADY.

Yo. Lo. I make thee not so little as thou art; for, indeed, there goes no more to the making of a steward, but a fair *imprimis*, and then a reasonable *item* infus'd into him, and the thing is done.

Sav. Nay, then, you stir my duty, and I must tell you——

Yo. Lo. What wouldst thou tell me? how hops grow? or hold some rotten discourse of sheep, or when our Lady-day falls? Prithee, farewell, and entertain my friends; be drunk, and burn thy table-books; and, my dear spark of velvet¹⁴, thou and I——

Sav. Good Sir, remember.

Yo. Lo. I do remember thee a foolish fellow, one that did put his trust in almanacks, and horse-fairs, and rose by honey, and pot-butter. Shall they come in yet?

Sav. Nay, then I must unfold your brother's pleasure: These be the lessons, Sir, he left behind him.

Yo. Lo. Prithee, expound the first.

Sav. 'I leave to keep my house three hundred pounds a-year; and my brother to dispose of it——'

Yo. Lo. Mark that, my wicked steward; and I dispose of it!

Sav. 'Whilst he bears himself like a gentleman, and my credit falls not in him.' Mark that, my good young Sir, mark that.

Yo. Lo. Nay, if it be no more, I shall fulfil it; while my legs will carry me I'll bear myself gentleman-like, but when I am drunk, let them bear me that can. Forward, dear steward.

Sav. 'Next, it is my will, that he be furnish'd (as my brother) with attendance, apparel, and the obedience of my people——'

Yo. Lo. Steward, this is as plain as your old minikin-breeches. Your wisdom will relent now, will it not? Be mollified, or——You understand me, Sir. Proceed.

¹⁴ *My dear spark of velvet.*] Mr. Seward proposes changing *velvet* to *vellum*.

Sav.

THE SCORNFUL LADY. 317

Sav. 'Yet, that my steward keep his place, and power, and bound my brother's wildness with his care.'

Yo. Lo. I'll hear no more ! This is Apocrypha ; bind it by itself, steward.

Sav. This is your brother's will ; and, as I take it, he makes no mention of such company as you would draw unto you : Captains of gallyfoists¹⁵ ; such as in a clear day have seen Calais, fellows that have no more of God, than their oaths come to ; they wear swords to reach fire at a play, and get there the oil'd end of a pipe for their guerdon. Then the remnant of your regiment are wealthy tobacco-merchants, that set up with one ounce, and break for three ; together with a forlorn hope of poets ; and all these look like Carthusians, things without linnen : Are these fit company for my master's brother ?

Yo. Lo. I will either convert thee (oh, thou Pagan steward) or presently confound thee and thy reckonings. Who's there ? Call in the gentlemen.

Sav. Good Sir !

Yo. Lo. Nay, you shall know both who I am, and where I am.

Sav. Are you my master's brother ?

Yo. Lo. Are you the sage master steward, with a face like an old Ephemeris ?

Enter his comrades, Captain, Traveller, Poet, &c.

Sav. Then God help all ¹⁶, I say !

Yo. Lo. Ay, and 'tis well said, my old peer of France. Welcome, gentlemen, welcome, gentlemen ;

¹⁵ *Captains of gallyfoists.*] See p. 181, of this volume.

¹⁶ *Sav. Then God help all, I say !*] Savil has been esteem'd by all good judges of comedy, an excellent character of a precise, dogmatical, self-conceited Steward : Always pretending to obtrude his advice, and as desirous of controuling with his opinions. The ingenious Mr. Addison, I remember, told me, that he sketch'd out his character of Vellum, in the comedy call'd the Drummer, purely from this model.

Mr. Theobald.

318 THE SCORNFUL LADY.

mine own dear lads, you're richly welcome. Know this old Harry-groat.

Capt. Sir, I will take your love——

Sav. Sir, you will take my purse.

Capt. And study to continue it.

Sav. I do believe you.

Trav. Your honourable friend and master's brother, hath given you to us for a worthy fellow, and so we hug you, Sir.

Sav. H'as given himself into the hands of varlets, to be carv'd out ¹⁷. Sir, are these the pieces?

Yo. Lo. They are the morals of the age, the virtues, men made of gold.

Sav. Of your gold, you mean, Sir.

Yo. Lo. This is a man of war, and cries, 'go on,' and wears his colours——

Sav. In's nose.

Yo. L. In the fragrant field. This is a traveller, Sir, knows men and manners, and has plow'd up the sea so far, 'till both the poles have knock'd; has seen the sun take coach, and can distinguish the colour of his horses, and their kinds; and had a Flanders-mare leap'd there.

Sav. 'Tis much.

Trav. I have seen more, Sir.

Sav. 'Tis even enough o' conscience. Sit down, and rest you; you are at the end of the world already. 'Would you had as good a living, Sir, as this fellow could lye you out of; he has a notable gift in't!

Yo. Lo. This ministers the smoke, and this the mufes.

Sav. And you the cloaths, and meat, and money. You have a goodly generation of 'em; pray, let them

¹⁷ *H'as given himself into the hands of varlets, not to be carv'd out.*] We cannot understand this passage as here printed; but think the word *not* an interpolation. Savil, we suppose, means, that Young Loveless has given himself into the hands of fellows who will consume him, eat him up; and accordingly afterwards says, 'You minister the cloaths, and meat, and money.'

multiply;

THE SCORNFUL LADY. 319

multiply ; your brother's house is big enough ; and to say truth, h'as too much land ; hang it, dirt !

Yo. Lo. Why, now thou art a loving stinkard. Fire off thy annotations and thy rent-books ; thou hast a weak brain, Savil, and with the next long bill thou wilt run mad. Gentlemen, you are once more welcome to three hundred pounds a-year ! We will be freely merry ; shall we not ?

Capt. Merry as mirth and wine, my lovely Loveless.

Poet. A serious look shall be a jury to excommunicate any man from our company.

Trav. We will not talk wisely neither ?

Yo. Lo. What think you, gentlemen, by all this revenue in drink ?

Capt. I am all for drink.

Trav. I am dry 'till it be so.

Poet. He that will not cry 'amen' to this, let him live sober, seem wise, and die o' th' quorum.

Yo. Lo. It shall be so ; we'll have it all in drink ; let meat and lodging go ; they are transitory, and shew men merely mortal. Then we'll have wenches, every one his wench, and every week a fresh one ; we'll keep no powder'd flesh. All these we have by warrant, under the title of 'things necessary : ' Here, upon this place I ground it ; 'the obedience of my people, and all necessaries.' Your opinions, gentlemen ?

Capt. 'Tis plain and evident, that he meant wenches.

Sav. Good Sir, let me expound it.

Capt. Here be as found men as yourself, Sir.

Poet. This do I hold to be the interpretation of it : In this word 'necessary' is concluded all that be helps to man ; woman was made the first, and therefore here the chiefest.

Yo. Lo. Believe me 'tis a learned one ; and by these words, 'the obedience of my people,' you, steward, being one, are bound to fetch us wenches.

Capt. He is, he is.

Yo. Lo. Steward, attend us for instructions.

Sav. But will you keep no house, Sir ?

Yo. Lo.

320 THE SCORNFUL LADY.

Yo. Lo. Nothing but drink, Sir; three hundred pounds in drink.

Sav. Oh, miserable house; and miserable I that live to see it! Good Sir, keep some meat.

Yo. Lo. Get us good whores; and, for your part, I'll board you in an alehouse; you shall have cheese and onions.

Sav. What shall become of me? no chimney smoking? Well, prodigal, your brother will come home.
[*Exit.*

Yo. Lo. Come, lads, I'll warrant you for wenches. Three hundred pounds in drink.

Omnes. Oh, brave Loveless!
[*Exeunt.*

A C T II.

Enter Lady, Welford, and Sir Roger.

Lady. **S**IR, now you see your bad lodging, I must bid you good night.

Wel. Lady, if there be any want, 'tis in want of you.

Lady. A little sleep will ease that compliment. Once more, good night.

Wel. Once more, dear lady; and then, all sweet nights.

Lady. Dear Sir, be short and sweet, then.

Wel. Shall the morrow prove better to me? shall I hope my suit happier by this night's rest?

Lady. Is your suit so sickly, that rest will help it? Pray ye let it rest then till I call for it. Sir, as a stranger you have had all my welcome: But, had I known your errand ere you came, your passage had been straiter. Sir, good night.

Wel. So fair, and cruel! Dear unkind, good night.
[*Exit Lady.*

Nay,

THE SCORNFUL LADY. 321

Nay, Sir, you shall stay with me; I'll press your zeal so far.

Rog. Oh, Lord, Sir!

Wel. Do you love tobacco?

Rog. Surely I love it, but it loves not me; yet, with your reverence, I will be bold.

Wel. Pray, light it, Sir. How do you like it?

Rog. I promise you it is notable stinging geer indeed. It is wet, Sir: Lord, how it brings down rheum!

Wel. Handle it again, Sir; you have a warm text of it.

Rog. Thanks ever promis'd for it¹⁸. I promise you it is very powerful, and, by a trope, spiritual; for, certainly, it moves in fundry places.

Wel. Ay, it does so, Sir; and me, especially, to ask, Sir, why you wear a night-cap?

Rog. Assuredly, I will speak the truth unto you. You shall understand, Sir, that my head is broken; and by whom? even by that visible beast¹⁹, the butler.

Wel. The butler! Certainly, he had all his drink about him when he did it. Strike one of your grave cassock! The offence, Sir?

¹⁸ *Thanks ever promised for it. I promise you.*] But why thanks promised? He certainly meant to render them for the favour. I dare say, a slight corruption has crept in, from the word *promise* immediately following. I make no doubt, but the Authors wrote *promised*; i. e. his thanks given by way of preface, or introduction. And, as it is a term in *logic* too, it has the greater analogy to Sir Roger's character.

Mr. Theobald.

¹⁹ *And by whom? even by that visible beast, the butler.*] An invisible butler would certainly be a rare curiosity. Every man, *quoad homo*, is equally visible at some times. I am persuaded, *risible* was the original word; i. e. that boisterous, noisy, laughing varlet. Or, perhaps, Sir Roger may use the word in a more quaint acceptation; to signify a man *risu dignus*, worthy to be laugh'd at.

Mr. Sympfon.

* *Visible beast*, says Mr. Seward, signifies, one that appears to every one to be a beast. That this was our Authors' meaning will not admit of a doubt; any more than that Mr. Sympfon's alteration is arbitrary and injudicious.

322 THE SCORNFUL LADY.

Rog. Reproving him at tra-trip, Sir, for swearing. You have the total, surely.

Wel. You reprov'd him when his rage was set a-tilt, and so he crack'd your canons: I hope he has not hurt your gentle reading. But shall we see these gentlewomen to-night?

Rog. Have patience, Sir, until our fellow Nicholas be deceas'd, that is, asleep; for so the word is taken: 'To sleep, to die; to die, to sleep'²⁰; a very figure, Sir.

Wel. Cannot you cast another for the gentlewomen?

Rog. Not till the man be in his bed, his grave; his grave, his bed: The very same again, Sir. Our comic poet gives the reason sweetly; *Plenus rimarum est*²¹; he is full of loop-holes, and will discover to our patroness.

Wel. Your comment, Sir, hath made me understand you.

Enter Martha, and Abigail to them, with a posset.

Rog. Sir, be address'd; the graces do salute you with a full bowl of plenty. Is our old enemy entomb'd?

Abig. He's safe.

Rog. And does he snore out supinely, with the poet?

²⁰ *To sleep, to die; to die, to sleep;*

Not till the man be in his bed, his grave; his grave, his bed;] These two figures, as Sir Roger calls them, are a manifest flirt at the Hamlet of Shakespeare, in that fine soliloquy, which begins, *To be, or not to be, &c.* *Mr. Theobald.*

Though we should suppose every person who reads this passage would consider it in the same light as Mr. Theobald has done, yet Mr. Seward thinks our Authors had no intention to flirt at Shakespeare, but meant this speech as a ridicule upon *bad imitations of real beauties*; 'Sir Roger's whole character being, says he, a burlesque upon *'scholarship.'*

²¹ *Plenus rimarum est, he is full of loop-holes.]* The comic poet, whom Sir Roger is here quoting, is Terence, in his Eunuch.

Parm. Plenus rimarum sum, baccatque illac perfluo.

Mr. Theobald.

Mar.

THE SCORNFUL LADY. 323

Mar. No, he out-snores the poet.

Wel. Gentlewoman, this courtesy shall bind a stranger to you, ever your servant.

Mar. Sir, my sister's strictness makes not us forget you are a stranger and a gentleman.

Abig. In sooth, Sir, were I changed into my lady, a gentleman, so well endued with parts, should not be lost.

Wel. I thank you, gentlewoman, and rest bound to you.—See, how this foul familiar chews the cud! From thee and three-and-fifty, good Love, deliver me!

Mar. Will you sit down, Sir, and take a spoon?

Wel. I take it kindly, lady.

Mar. It is our best banquet, Sir.

Rog. Shall we give thanks?

Wel. I have to the gentlewomen already, Sir.

Mar. Good Sir Roger, keep that breath to cool your part o' th' posset; you may chance have a scalding zeal else; an you will needs be doing, pray tell your twenty to yourself. 'Would you could like this, Sir?

Wel. I would your sister would like me as well, lady!

Mar. Sure, Sir, she would not eat you. But banish that imagination; she's only wedded to herself, lies with herself, and loves herself; and for another husband than herself, he may knock at the gate, but ne'er come in. Be wise, Sir, she's a woman, and a trouble, and has her many faults; the least of which is, she cannot love you.

Abig. God pardon her, she'll do worse! 'Would I were worthy his least grief, mistress Martha.

Wel. Now I must over-hear her.

Mar. Faith, 'would thou hadst them all with all my heart; I do not think they would make thee a day older.

Abig. Sir, will you put in deeper; 'tis the sweeter.

Mar. Well said, old sayings.

Wel. She looks like one, indeed. Gentlewoman,
X 2 you

324 THE SCORNFUL LADY.

you keep your word ; your sweet self has made the bottom sweeter.

Abig. Sir, I begin a frolic : Dare you change, Sir ?

Wel. Myself for you, so please you. That smile has turn'd my stomach : This is right the old emblem of the moyle cropping of thistles. Lord, what a hunting head she carries ! sure she has been ridden with a martingale. Now, Love, deliver me !

Rog. Do I dream, or do I wake ? surely, I know not. Am I rub'd off ? Is this the way of all my morning prayers ? Oh, Roger, thou art but grass, and woman as a flower ! Did I for this consume my quarters²² in meditation, vows, and woo'd her in heroic epistles ? Did I expound the Owl²³, and undertook, with labour and expence, the recollection of those thousand pieces, consum'd in cellars, and tobacco-shops, of that our honour'd Englishman Nic. Broughton²⁴ ? Have I done this, and am I done thus to ? I will end with the wise man, and say, ' He that holds a woman, has an eel by the tail.'

Mar. Sir, 'tis so late, and our entertainment (meaning our posset) by this is grown so cold, that 'twere an unmannerly part longer to hold you from your rest. Let what the house has be at your command, Sir.

²² *Did I for this consume my quarters.*] If Sir Roger means his body, as Mr. Sympson observed to me, one should conjecture, that *carcass* was more significant, if not more obvious to be understood.

Mr. Theobald.

We have retained the old word, *quarters*, because it may refer to time, as well as to Sir Roger's person.

²³ *Did I expound the Owl.*] The Owl is evidently some piece of Nich. Broughton's, or some such doughty writers. *Mr. Seward.*

²⁴ *Of that our honour'd Englishman, Ni. Br.*] The Poets, I do not apprehend, had any intention of sinking, or making a secret, of this author's name. He was so well known at that time of day, that the copyists thought they might safely give us his name abbreviated. He was a voluminous writer, who, among other things, compiled an elaborate tract about Fifth-Monarchy Men. Ben Jonson, in his *Alchemist*, has made Dol Common, in her ecstatic fit to Sir Epicure Mammon, talk very largely out of the works of this Nich. Broughton.

Mr. Theobald.

Wel.

THE SCORNFUL LADY. 325

Wel. Sweet rest be with you, lady. And to you what you desire too.

Abig. It should be some such good thing like yourself then. [*Ex. Mar. and Abig.*]

Wel. Heav'n keep me from that curse, and all my issue! Good-night, antiquity.

Rog. *Solamen miseris socios habuisse doloris*: But I alone——

Wel. Learned Sir, will you bid my man come to me? and, requesting a greater measure of your learning, good-night, good master Roger.

Rog. Good Sir, peace be with you! [*Exit Roger.*]

Wel. Adieu, dear *Domine*! Half a dozen such in a kingdom would make a man forswear confession: For who, that had but half his wits about him, would commit the counsel of a serious sin to such a ²⁵ crewel night-cap? Why, how now, shall we have an antick?

Enter servant.

Whose head do you carry upon your shoulders, that you joll it so against the post? is it for your ease? or have you seen the cellar? Where are my slippers, Sir?

Ser. Here, Sir.

Wel. Where, Sir? Have you got the pot-vertigo²⁶? Have you seen the horses, Sir?

Ser. Yes, Sir.

Wel. Have they any meat?

Ser. Faith, Sir, they have a kind of wholesome rushes; hay I cannot call it.

Wel. And no provender?

²⁵ *To such a cruel night cap?*] The poets, as Mr. Sympson observ'd with me, certainly wrote, *crewel*; i. e. made of the ends of coarse worsted. *Mr. Theobald.*

²⁶ *Have you got the pot-verdugo?*] *Verdugo* is a word of Spanish extraction; but, amongst all the significations in which it is taken, it has no one consonant to the idea and meaning here required. The poets must certainly have wrote *vertigo*, a dizziness, or swimming in the head, with drink. *Mr. Theobald.*

Ser. Sir, so I take it.

Wel. You are merry, Sir; and why so?

Ser. Faith, Sir, here are no oats to be got, unless you'll have 'em in porridge; the people are so mainly given to spoon-meat. Yonder's a cast of coach-mares of the gentlewoman's, the strangest cattle.

Wel. Why?

Ser. Why, they are transparent, Sir; you may see through them: And such a house!

Wel. Come, Sir, the truth of your discovery.

Ser. Sir, they are in tribes like Jews: The kitchen and the dairy make one tribe, and have their faction and their fornication within themselves; the buttery and the landry are another, and there's no love lost; the chambers are entire, and what's done there is somewhat higher than my knowledge. But this I am sure, between these copulations, a stranger is kept virtuous, that is, fasting. But, of all this, the drink, Sir——

Wel. What of that, Sir?

Ser. Faith, Sir, I will handle it as the time and your patience will give me leave. This drink, or this cooling julap, of which three spoonfulls kill the calenture, a pint breeds the cold palsy——

Wel. Sir, you belye the house.

Ser. I would I did, Sir. But, as I am a true man, if it were but one degree colder, nothing but an ass's hoof would hold it ²⁷.

²⁷ ———if it were but one degree

Colder, nothing but an ass's hoof would hold it.] It is one peculiar impropriety in our authors, (who, to be sure, ought every where to shew their learning, so it be done without pedantry;) that they too frequently put it in the mouths of characters, who cannot well be supposed to know any thing of the matter. The allusion here is to those extreme cold waters which flow'd down from the mountain Nonacris in Arcadia, and which would penetrate thro' every vehicle but that of an horse's hoof; as Justin tells us in the xiith Book of his History. Plutarch and Ælian say, it was an ass's hoof. Arrian, Pliny, and Vitruvius, a mule's: And Quintus Curtius, an ox's. The variation in this point is of very little consequence. They were of so very cold a quality, as to be mortal to those who drank of them.

Mr. Theobald.

Wel.

THE SCORNFUL LADY. 327

Wel. I am glad on't, Sir ; for, if it had prov'd stronger, you had been tongue-ty'd of these commendations. Light me the candle, Sir ; I'll hear no more.
[*Exeunt.*]

Enter Young Loveless, and his comrades, with wenches, and two fiddlers.

Yo. Lo. Come, my brave man of war, trace out thy darling ;
And you, my learned council, set and turn, boys ;
Kiss till the cow come home ; kiss close, kiss close, knaves.
My modern poet, thou shalt kiss in couplets.

Enter servant, with wine.

Strike up, you merry varlets, and leave your peeping ;
This is no pay for fiddlers.

Capt. Oh, my dear boy, thy Hercules, thy captain, Makes thee his Hylas, his delight, his solace.
Love thy brave man of war, and let thy bounty Clap him in shamois !
Let there be deducted out of our main potation Five marks, in hatchments to adorn this thigh, Cramp'd with this rest of peace²⁸, and I will fight Thy battles.

Yo. Lo. Thou shalt have't, boy, and fly in feather ;
Lead on a march, you michers²⁹.

²⁸ *Five marks in hatchments to adorn this thigh,*

Cramp'd with this rest of peace.] The *rest of peace* is a little tautological, and I believe the original was,

Cramp'd with the rust of peace.

i. e. Cramp'd with wearing such a rusty sword as a long peace had reduc'd him to. He wanted to have a new sword, or at least to have his old one new *hatch'd*: The *hatch* of the sword is the gilded wire of the handle, or the *gilt* of it in general. *Mr. Seward.*

We have no doubt of *rest* being the proper word, because the Captain complains of his thigh being *cramp'd* ; which it might be by a want of exercise, but hardly by having a rusty, any more than a bright, sword hanging near it.

²⁹ *You michers.*] *i. e.* Idlers, loiterers.

Enter Savil.

Sav. Oh, my head, oh, my heart, what a noise and change is here ! 'Would I had been cold i' th' mouth before this day, and ne'er have liv'd to see this dissolution. He that lives within a mile of this place, had as good sleep in the perpetual noise of an iron-mill. There's a dead sea of drink i' th' cellar, in which goodly vessels lie wreck'd ; and, in the middle of this deluge, appear the tops of flagons and black-jacks, like churches drown'd i' th' marshes.

Yo. Lo. What, art thou come, my sweet Sir Amias ? Welcome to Troy ! Come, thou shalt kiss my Helen, And court her in a dance.

Sav. Good Sir, consider.

Yo. Lo. Shall we consider, gentlemen ? how say you ?

Capt. Consider ! That were a simple toy, i' faith. Consider ! Whose moral's that ? The man that cries 'Consider,' is our foe : Let my steel know him.

Yo. Lo. Stay thy dead-doing hand ; he must not die yet :

Prithee be calm, my Hector,

Capt. Peasant slave !

Thou groom compos'd of grudgings, live and thank This gentleman ; thou hadst seen Pluto else ! The next 'consider' kills thee.

Trav. Let him drink down his word again, in a gallon of sack.

Poet. 'Tis but a snuff ; make it two gallons, and let him do it kneeling in repentance.

Sav. Nay, rather kill me ; there's but a lay-man lost. Good captain, do your office.

Yo. Lo. Thou shalt drink, steward ; drink and dance, my steward. Strike him a hornpipe, squeakers ! Take thy stiver, and pace her till she stew³⁰.

Sav.

³⁰ *Take thy stiver, and pace her till she stew.*] Here is both obscurity and nonsense, from the casual interposition of one unnecessary letter. *Stive* was the old and obsolete term for the *stew* ; and consequently,

THE SCORNFUL LADY. 329

Sav. Sure, Sir, I cannot dance with your gentlewomen ; they are too light for me. Pray break my head, and let me go.

Capt. He shall dance, he shall dance.

Yo. Lo. He shall dance, and drink, and be drunk and dance, and be drunk again, and shall see no meat in a year.

Poet. And three quarters.

Yo. Lo. And three quarters be it.

Capt. Who knocks there ? let him in.

Enter Elder Loveless, disguis'd..

Sav. Some to deliver me, I hope.

El. Lo. Gentlemen, God save you all ! My business is to one master Loveless.

Capt. This is the gentleman you mean ; view him and take his inventory, he's a right one.

El. Lo. He promises no less, Sir.

Yo. Lo. Sir, your business ?

El. Lo. Sir, I should let you know, yet I am loth, yet I am sworn to't ! 'Would some other tongue would speak it for me !

Yo. Lo. Out with it, i' God's name.

El. Lo. All I desire, Sir, is the patience and suff'rance of a man ; and, good Sir, be not mov'd more——

Yo. Lo. Than a pottle of sack will do. Here is my hand ; prithee, thy business ?

El. Lo. Good Sir, excuse me ; and whatsoever you hear, think must have been known unto you ; and be yourself, discrete, and bear it nobly.

Yo. Lo. Prithee dispatch me.

El. Lo. Your brother's dead, Sir.

Yo. Lo. Thou dost not mean—dead drunk ?

sequently, a *silver*, as it should be restored in the text, was a girl, a strumpet, who ply'd there. Hence, perhaps, might come the word *silver* too, to signify that inconsiderable coin (the fifth part of an English Penny) the pay of these mean prostitutes, these *meretrices diobolares*, as Plautus styles them.

Mr. Theobald.

El. Lo.

330 THE SCORNFUL LADY.

El. Lo. No, no; dead and drown'd at sea, Sir.

Yo. Lo. Art sure he's dead?

El. Lo. Too sure, Sir.

Yo. Lo. Ay, but art thou very certainly sure of it?

El. Lo. As sure, Sir, as I tell it.

Yo. Lo. But art thou sure he came not up again?

El. Lo. He may come up, but ne'er to call you brother.

Yo. Lo. But art sure he had water enough to drown him?

El. Lo. Sure, Sir, he wanted none.

Yo. Lo. I would not have him want; I lov'd him better. Here, I forgive thee; and, i'faith, be plain; how do I bear it?

El. Lo. Very wisely, Sir.

Yo. Lo. Fill him some wine. Thou dost not see me mov'd; these transitory toys ne'er trouble me; he's in a better place, my friend, I know't. Some fellows would have cry'd now, and have curs'd thee, and fall'n out with their meat, and kept a pother; but all this helps not: He was too good for us, and let God keep him! There's the right use on't, friend. Off with thy drink; thou hast a spice of sorrow makes thee dry: Fill him another. Savil, your master's dead; and who am I now, Savil? Nay, let's all bear it well. Wipe, Savil, wipe; tears are but thrown away. We shall have wenches now; shall we not, Savil?

Sav. Yes, Sir.

Yo. Lo. And drink innumerable?

Sav. Yes, forsooth.

Yo. Lo. And you'll strain court'fy, and be drunk a little?

Sav. I would be glad, Sir, to do my weak endeavour.

Yo. Lo. You may be brought in time to love a wench too.

Sav. In time the sturdy oak, Sir——

Yo. Lo. Some more wine for my friend there.

El. Lo.

THE SCORNFUL LADY. 331

El. Lo. I shall be drunk anon for my good news : But I have a loving brother, that's my comfort.

Yo. Lo. Here's to you, Sir ; this is the worst I wish you for your news : And if I had another elder brother, and say, it were his chance to feed haddocks, I should be still the same you see me now, a poor contented gentleman. More wine for my friend there ; he's dry again.

El. Lo. I shall be, if I follow this beginning. Well, my dear brother, if I 'scape this drowning, 'tis your turn next to sink ; you shall duck twice before I help you.—Sir, I cannot drink more ; pray let me have your pardon.

Yo. Lo. Oh, lord, Sir, it is your modesty ! More wine ; give him a bigger glass. Hug him, my Captain ! Thou shalt be my chief mourner.

Cap. And this my pennon. Sir, a full carouse to you, and to my lord of land here.

El. Lo. I feel a buzzing in my brains ; pray God they bear this out, and I'll ne'er trouble them so far again. Here's to you, Sir.

Yo. Lo. To my dear steward. Down o' your knees, you infidel, you pagan ! be drunk, and penitent.

Sav. Forgive me, Sir, and I'll be any thing.

Yo. Lo. Then be a bawd ; I'll have thee a brave bawd.

El. Lo. Sir, I must take my leave of you, my business is so urgent.

Yo. Lo. Let's have a bridling cast, before you go. Fill's a new stoop.

El. Lo. I dare not, Sir, by no means.

Yo. Lo. Have you any mind to a wench ? I would fain gratify you for the pains you took, Sir.

El. Lo. As little as to the other.

Yo. Lo. If you find any stirring, do but say so.

El. Lo. Sir, you're too bounteous : When I feel that itching, you shall assuage it, Sir, before another. This only, and farewell, Sir : Your brother, when the storm was most extreme, told all about him, he left

332 THE SCORNFUL LADY.

left a will, which lies close behind a chimney in the matted chamber. And so, as well, Sir, as you have made me able, I take my leave.

Yo. Lo. Let us embrace him all! If you grow dry before you end your business, pray take a bait here; I have a fresh hoghead for you.

Sav. You shall neither will, nor choose, Sir. My master is a wonderful fine gentleman; has a fine state, a very fine state, Sir; I am his steward, Sir, and his man.

El. Lo. Would you were your own, Sir, as I left you. Well, I must cast about, or all sinks.

Sav. Farewell, gentleman, gentleman, gentleman!

El. Lo. What would you with me, Sir?

Sav. Farewell, gentleman!

El. Lo. Oh, sleep, Sir, sleep. [*Ex. El. Lo.*]

Yo. Lo. Well, boys, you see what's fall'n; let's in and drink, and give thanks for it.

Capt. Let's give thanks for it.

Yo. Lo. Drunk, as I live.

Sav. Drunk, as I live, boys.

Yo. Lo. Why, now thou art able to discharge thine office, and cast up a reckoning of some weight. I will be knighted, for my state will bear it; 'tis sixteen hundred, boys! Off with your husks; I'll skin you all in fatten.

Capt. Oh, sweet Loveless!

Sav. All in fatten! Oh, sweet Loveless!

Yo. Lo. March in, my noble compeers! And' this, my countess, shall be led by two: And so proceed we to the will. [*Exeunt.*]

Enter Morecraft and Widow.

Mor. And, Widow, as I say, be your own friend: Your husband left you wealthy, ay, and wise; continue so, sweet duck, continue so. Take heed of young smooth varlets, younger brothers; they are worms that will eat through your bags; they are very light'ning, that with a flash or two will melt your money,

THE SCORNFUL LADY. 333

money, and never finge your purse-strings; they are colts, wench, colts, heady and dangerous, 'till we take 'em up, and make 'em fit for bonds. Look upon me; I have had, and have yet, matter of moment, girl, matter of moment: You may meet with a worse back; I'll not commend it.

Wid. Nor I neither, Sir.

Mor. Yet thus far, by your favour, Widow, 'tis tough.

Wid. And therefore not for my diet; for I love a tender one.

Mor. Sweet Widow, leave your frumps, and be edified: You know my state; I sell no perspectives, scarfs, gloves, nor hangers, nor put my trust in shoo-ties; and where your husband in an age was rising by burnt figs, dredg'd with meal and powdered sugar, faunders, and grains, wormseed and rotten raisins, and such vile tobacco that made the footmen mangy; I, in a year, have put up hundreds; inclos'd, my Widow, those pleasant meadows, by a forfeit mortgage; for which the poor knight takes a lone chamber, owes for his ale, and dare not beat his hostess. Nay, more——

Wid. Good Sir, no more. Whate'er my husband was, I know what I am; and, if you marry me, you must bear it bravely off, Sir.

Mor. Not with the head, sweet Widow.

Wid. No, sweet Sir, but with your shoulders. I must have you dubb'd; for under that I will not stoop a feather. My husband was a fellow lov'd to toil, fed ill, made gain his exercise, and so grew costive, which, for that I was his wife, I gave way to, and spun mine own smocks coarse, and, Sir, so little——But let that pass: Time, that wears all things out, wore out this husband; who, in penitence of such fruitless five years marriage, left me great with his wealth; which, if you'll be a worthy gossip to, be knighted, Sir.

Enter

Enter Savil.

Mor. Now, Sir, from whom come you? whose man are you, Sir?

Sav. Sir, I come from young master Loveless.

Mor. Be silent, Sir; I have no money, not a penny for you: He's funk; your master's funk; a perish'd man, Sir.

Sav. Indeed, his brother's funk, Sir; God be with him! A perish'd man, indeed, and drown'd at sea.

Mor. How saidst thou, good my friend? his brother drown'd?

Sav. Untimely, Sir, at sea.

Mor. And thy young master left sole heir?

Sav. Yes, Sir.

Mor. And he wants money?

Sav. Yes; and sent me to you, for he is now to be knighted.

Mor. Widow, be wise; there's more land coming, Widow; be very wise, and give thanks for me, Widow.

Wid. Be you very wise, and be knighted, and then give thanks for me, Sir.

Sav. What says your worship to this money?

Mor. I say, he may have money, if he please.

Sav. A thousand, Sir?

Mor. A thousand, Sir, provided, any wife, Sir, his land lie for the payment; otherwise——

Enter Young Loveless and comrades, to them.

Sav. He's here himself, Sir, and can better tell you.

Mor. My notable dear friend, and worthy master Loveless, and now right worshipful, all joy and welcome!

Yo. Lo. Thanks to my dear incloser, master Morecraft. Prithee, old angel-gold, salute my family; I'll do as much for yours. This, and your own desires, fair gentlewoman.

Wid. And yours, Sir, if you mean well. 'Tis a handsome gentleman.

Yo. Lo.

THE SCORNFUL LADY. 335

Yo. Lo. Sirrah, my brother's dead.

Mor. Dead?

Yo. Lo. Dead; and by this time fous'd for Ember-week.

Mor. Dead?

Yo. Lo. Drown'd, drown'd at sea, man. By the next fresh conger that comes we shall hear more.

Mor. Now, by the faith of my body, it moves me much.

Yo. Lo. What, wilt thou be an afs, and weep for the dead? Why, I thought nothing but a general inundation would have mov'd thee. Prithee, be quiet; he hath left his land behind him.

Mor. Oh, has he so?

Yo. Lo. Yes, faith, I thank him for't: I've all, boy. Hast any ready money?

Mor. Will you sell, Sir?

Yo. Lo. No, not outright, good Gripe. Marry, a mortgage, or such a slight security.

Mor. I have no money, Sir, for mortgage: If you'll sell, and all or none, I'll work a new mine for you.

Sav. Good Sir, look before you; he'll work you out of all else. If you sell all your land, you have sold your country; and then you must to sea, to seek your brother, and there lie pickled in a powdering-tub, and break your teeth with biscuits and hard beef, that must have watering, Sir: And where's your three hundred pounds a-year in drink then? If you'll turn up the Straits, you may; for you have no calling for drink there, but with a cannon, nor no scoring but on your ship's sides; and then, if you 'scape with life, and take a faggot-boat and a bottle of usquebaugh, come home, poor man, like a type of Thames-street, stinking of pitch and poor-john. I cannot tell, Sir; I would be loth to see it.

Capt. Steward, you are an afs, a meazel'd mungrel; and, were it not against the peace of my sovereign friend here, I would break your forecasting coxcomb, dog, I would, even with thy staff of office there, thy
pen

336 THE SCORNFUL LADY.

pen and inkhorn. Noble boy, the god of gold here has fed thee well³¹; take money for thy dirt. Hark, and believe; thou art cold of constitution, thy seat unhealthful; sell and be wise: We are three that will adorn thee, and live according to thine own heart, child; mirth shall be only ours, and only ours shall be the black-ey'd beauties of the time. Money makes men eternal.

Poet. Do what you will, it is the noblest course: Then you may live without the charge of people; only we four will make a family; ay, and an age that will beget new annals, in which I'll write thy life, my son of pleasure, equal with Nero and Caligula.

Yo. Lo. What men were they, Captain?

Capt. Two roaring boys of Rome, that made all split.

Yo. Lo. Come, Sir, what dare you give?

Sav. You will not sell, Sir?

Yo. Lo. Who told you so, Sir?

Sav. Good Sir, have a care.

Yo. Lo. Peace, or I'll tack your tongue up to your roof. What money? speak.

Mor. Six thousand pounds, Sir.

Capt. Take it; h'as overbidden, by the sun; bind him to his bargain quickly.

Yo. Lo. Come, strike me luck with earnest, and draw the writings.

Mor. There's a god's penny for thee.

Sav. Sir, for my old master's sake, let my farm be excepted: If I become his tenant, I am undone, my children beggars, and my wife God knows what. Consider me, dear Sir.

³¹ *The god of gold here has fed thee well.*] Mr. Seward imagines, 'that the last syllable of the true word only remained in the copy, *fed*, which the editors altered to *fed*;' and therefore proposes reading *advised*. Though we think his suggestion ingenious, the variation from the old authorities is too great, for us to admit *advised* into the text. It is very probable the Captain means, 'Morecraft has hitherto fed, supplied, you well with money; and do not break off with him now.'

Mor.

THE SCORNFUL LADY. 337

Mor. I'll have all or none.

Yo. Lo. All in, all in. Dispatch the writings.

[*Exit with Com.*

Wid. Go, thou art a pretty forehanded fellow!
'Would, thou wert wiser.

Sav. Now do I sensibly begin to feel
Myself a rascal! 'Would I could teach a school,
Or beg, or lye well: I am utterly undone.
Now he, that taught thee to deceive and cozen,
Take thee to his mercy! So be it. [*Exit.*

Mor. Come, Widow, come, never stand upon a
kighthood; it is a mere paper honour, and not
proof enough for a serjeant. Come, come, I'll make
thee——

Wid. To answer in short, 'tis this, Sir. No knight,
no Widow: If you make me any thing, it must be a
lady; and so I take my leave.

Mor. Farewell, sweet Widow, and think of it.

Wid. Sir, I do more than think of it; it makes me
dream, Sir. [*Exit Wid.*

Mor. She's rich and sober, if this itch were from
her: And, say, I be at the charge to pay the footmen,
and the trumpets, ay, and the horsemen too, and be
a knight, and she refuse me then:
Then am I hcast into the subsidy,
And so by consequence should prove a coxcomb:
I'll have a care of that. Six thousand pound,
And then the land is mine: There's some refreshing
yet. [*Exit.*

A C T III.

Enter Abigail, and drops her glove.

Abig. IF he but follow me, as all my hopes
Tell me he's man enough, up goes my rest,
And, I know, I shall draw him.

Enter Welford.

Wel. This is the strangest pamper'd piece of flesh
towards fifty, that ever frailty cop'd withal. What
a trim *l'envoy* here she has put upon me³²: These wo-
men are a proud kind of cattle, and love this whore-
son doing so directly, that they will not stick to make
their very skins bawds to their flesh. Here's dogskin
and storax sufficient to kill a hawk: What to do with
it, beside nailing it up³³ amongst Irish heads of
teer, to shew the mightiness of her palm, I know not.
There she is: I must enter into dialogue.

Lady, you have lost your glove.

Abig. Not, Sir, if you have found it.

Wel. It was my meaning, lady, to restore it.

Abig. 'Twill be uncivil in me to take back
A favour fortune hath so well bestow'd, Sir.
Pray, wear it for me.

Wel. I had rather wear a bell.—But, hark you,
mistress,
What hidden virtue is there in this glove,
That you would have me wear it? Is it good

³² *What a trim l'envoy here she has put upon me.*] *L'envoy* signifies an ambassador, emissary, go-between. It is a term still in use to signify a minister. Welford speaks with reference to Abigail's glove, which she drops when she enters.

³³ *Amongst Irish heads of teer, to shew the mightiness of her palm.*] *Teer* is the Irish pronunciation of deer; the *palm*, or *palmer*, is call'd the crown of a stag's head.

Mr. Theobald.

THE SCORNFUL LADY. 339

Against fore eyes, or will it charm the tooth-ach?
Or these red tops, being steep'd in white-wine soluble,
Will't kill the itch? or has it so conceal'd
A providence to keep my hand from bonds?
If it have none of these, and prove no more
But a bare glove of half-a-crown a pair,
'Twill be but half a courtesy; I wear two always.
Faith, let's draw cuts; one will do me no pleasure.

Abig. The tenderness of 's years keeps him as yet
In ignorance: He's a well-moulded fellow,
And I wonder his blood should stir no higher;
But 'tis his want of company: I must
Grow nearer to him.

Enter Elder Loveless disguis'd.

El. Lo. God save you both!

Abig. And pardon you, Sir! This is somewhat rude:
How came you hither?

El. Lo. Why, through the doors; they are open.

Wel. What are you? and what business have you
here?

El. Lo. More, I believe, than you have.

Abig. Who would this fellow speak with? Art thou
sober?

El. Lo. Yes; I come not here to sleep.

Wel. Prithee, what art thou?

El. Lo. As much, gay man, as thou art; I am a
gentleman.

Wel. Art thou no more?

El. Lo. Yes, more than thou dar'st be; a soldier.

Abig. Thou dost not come to quarrel?

El. Lo. No, not with women. I come here to speak
With a gentlewoman.

Abig. Why, I am one.

El. Lo. But not with one so gentle.

Wel. This is a fine fellow.

El. Lo. Sir, I'm not fine yet. I am but new come
over;

Direct me with your ticket to your tailor,

Y 2

And

340 THE SCORNFUL LADY.

And then I shall be fine, Sir. Lady, if there be
A better of your sex within this house,
Say I would see her.

Abig. Why, am not I good enough for you, Sir?

El. Lo. Your way you'll be too good. Pray, end
my business.

This is another suitor: Oh, frail woman!

Wel. This fellow, with his bluntness, hopes to do
More than the long suits of a thousand could³⁴:
Tho' he be sour, he's quick; I must not trust him.
Sir, this lady is not to speak with you; she is more
serious. You smell as if you were new calk'd; go,
and be handsome, and then you may sit with the
servingmen.

El. Lo. What are you, Sir?

Wel. Troth, guess by my outside.

El. Lo. Then, I take you, Sir, for some new filken
thing, wean'd from the country, that shall (when you
come to keep good company) be beaten into better
manners. Pray, good proud gentlewoman, help me to
your mistress.

Wel. How many lives hast thou, that thou talk'st
thus rudely³⁵?

El. Lo. But one, one; I am neither cat nor woman.

Wel. And will that one life, Sir, maintain you ever
In such bold sauciness?

³⁴ *This fellow, with his bluntness, &c.]* So Shakespeare, in his
King Lear, Act II.

*This is some fellow,
Who having been prais'd for bluntness, doth affect
A saucy roughness; and constrains the garb,
Quite from his nature. He can't flatter, he!
An honest mind and plain, he must speak truth;
An they will take it, so; if not, he's plain.
These kind of knaves I know, which in this plainness
Harbour more craft, and more corrupter ends,
Than twenty filly ducking observants,
That stretch their duties nicely.*

³⁵ *Abig. How many lives, &c.]* All the copies place this speech
to Abigail. We have ventured to transfer it to Welford; which his
next speech, we think, fully warrants us to do.

El. Lo.

THE SCORNFUL LADY. 341

El. Lo. Yes, 'mongst a nation of such men as you are,

And be no worse for wearing. Shall I speak
With this lady?

Abig. No, by my troth, shall you not.

El. Lo. I must stay here then.

Wel. That you shall not, neither.

El. Lo. Good fine thing, tell me why?

Wel. Good angry thing, I'll tell you:

This is no place for such companions;
Such lousy gentlemen shall find their business
Better i' th' suburbs; there your strong pitch-perfume,
Mingled with lees of ale, shall reek in fashion:
This is no Thames-Street, Sir.

Abig. This gentleman informs you truly.
Prithee, be satisfied, and seek the suburbs,
Good captain, or whatever title else
The warlike eel-boats have bestow'd upon thee.
Go and reform thyself; prithee be sweeter;
And know, my lady speaks with no such swabbers.

El. Lo. You cannot talk me out with your tradition
Of wit you pick from plays; go to, I have found ye.
And for you, tender Sir, whose gentle blood
Runs in your nose, and makes you snuff at all
But three-pil'd people³⁶, I do let you know,
He that begot your worship's fatten suit,
Can make no men, Sir. I will see this lady,
And, with the reverence of your silkenhip,
In these old ornaments.

Wel. You will not, sure?

El. Lo. Sure, Sir, I shall.

Abig. You would be beaten out?

El. Lo. Indeed I would not; or, if I would be
beaten,

Pray, who shall beat me? This good gentleman
Looks as he were o' th' peace.

³⁶ *But three-pil'd people.*] i. e. Wearers of velvet; the pile is the soft shag or pluff of it.

Mr. Theobald.

342 THE SCORNFUL LADY.

Wel. Sir, you shall see that. Will you get you out?

El. Lo. Yes; that that shall correct your boy's tongue.

Dare you fight? I will stay here still. [*They draw.*

Abig. Oh, their things are out! Help, help, for God's sake!

Madam! Jesus! They foin at one another,

Madam! Why, who is within there?

Enter Lady.

Lady. Who breeds this rudeness?

Wel. This uncivil fellow.

He says he comes from sea; where, I believe,
H'as purg'd away his manners.

Lady. Why, what of him?

Wel. Why, he will rudely, without once 'God
bless you,'

Prefs to your privacies, and no denial
Must stand betwixt your person and his business,
I let go his ill language.

Lady. Sir, have you
Business with me?

El. Lo. Madam, some, I have;
But not so serious to pawn my life for't,
If you keep this quarter, and maintain about you
Such knights o' th' fun as this is, to defy
Men of employment to you, you may live;
But in what fame?

Lady. Pray stay, Sir, who has wrong'd you?

El. Lo. Wrong me he cannot, though uncivilly
He flung his wild words at me: But to you,
I think, he did no honour, to deny
The haste I come withal a passage to you,
Though I seem coarse.

Lady. Excuse me, gentle Sir; 'twas from my know-
ledge,
And shall have no protection. And to you, Sir,
You have shew'd more heat than wit, and from your-
self

Have

THE SCORNFUL LADY. 343

Have borrow'd pow'r I never gave you here,
To do these vile unmanly things. My house
Is no blind street to swagger in ; and my favours
Not doting yet on your unknown deserts
So far, that I should make you master of my business.
My credit yet stands fairer with the people
Than to be tried with swords ; and they that come
To do me service, must not think to win me
With hazard of a murder. If your love
Consist in fury, carry it to the camp ;
And there, in honour of some common mistress,
Shorten your youth. I pray be better temper'd ;
And give me leave awhile, Sir.

Wel. You must have it. [Exit Welford.]

Lady. Now, Sir, your business ?

El. Lo. First, I thank you for schooling this young
fellow,

Whom his own follies, which he's prone enough
Daily to fall into, if you but frown,
Shall level him a way to his repentance.
Next, I should rail at you ; but you are a woman,
And anger's lost upon you.

Lady. Why at me, Sir ?

I never did you wrong ; for, to my knowledge,
This is the first sight of you.

El. Lo. You have done that,
I must confess, I have the least curse in,
Because the least acquaintance : But there be
(If there be honour in the minds of men)
Thousands, when they shall know what I deliver,
(As all good men must share in't) will to shame
Blast your black memory.

Lady. How is this, good Sir ?

El. Lo. 'Tis that, that, if you have a soul, will
choke it :

You've kill'd a gentleman.

Lady. I kill'd a gentleman !

El. Lo. You, and your cruelty, have kill'd him,
woman !

344 THE SCORNFUL LADY.

And such a man (let me be angry in't)
Whose least worth weigh'd above all womens' virtues
That are; I spare you all to come too: Guess him now.

Lady. I am so innocent, I cannot, Sir.

El. Lo. Repent, you mean. You are a perfect woman,

And, as the first was, made for man's undoing.

Lady. Sir, you have miss'd your way; I am not she.

El. Lo. Would he had miss'd his way too, though
he had wander'd

Farther than women are ill spoken of,
So he had miss'd this misery. You, lady——

Lady. How do you do, Sir?

El. Lo. Well enough, I hope,

While I can keep myself out from temptations.

Lady. Pray, leap into this matter; whither would
you?

El. Lo. You had a servant, that your peevishness
Enjoin'd to travel.

Lady. Such a one I have
Still, and should be grieved it were otherwise.

El. Lo. Then have your asking, and be griev'd;
he's dead!

How you will answer for his worth I know not;
But this I am sure, either he, or you, or both,
Were stark mad; else he might have liv'd
To've given a stronger testimony to th' world,
Of what he might have been. He was a man
I knew but in his evening; ten suns after,
Forc'd by a tyrant storm, our beaten bark
Bulg'd under us; in which sad parting blow
He call'd upon his saint, but not for life,
On you, unhappy woman; and, whilst all
Sought to preserve their souls, he desp'rately
Embrac'd a wave, crying to all that saw it,
'If any live, go to my Fate, that forc'd me
'To this untimely end, and make her happy.'
His name was Loveless; and I 'scap'd the storm,
And now you have my business.

Lady.

Lady. 'Tis too much.

'Would I had been that storm; he had not perish'd.
If you'll rail now, I will forgive you, Sir:
Or if you'll call in more, if any more
Come from his ruin, I shall justly suffer
What they can say: I do confess myself
A guilty cause in this. I would say more,
But grief is grown too great to be deliver'd³⁷.

El. Lo. I like this well: These women are strange
things. [Aside.

'Tis somewhat of the latest now to weep;
You should have wept when he was going from you,
And chain'd him with those tears at home.

Lady. 'Would you had told me then so; these two
arms
Had been his sea.

El. Lo. Trust me, you move me much:
But, say he liv'd; these were forgotten things again.

Lady. Ay, say you so?
Sure, I should know that voice: This is knavery.
I'll fit you for it.—Were he living, Sir,
I would persuade you to be charitable,
Ay, and confess we are not all so ill
As your opinion holds us. Oh, my friend,
What penance shall I pull upon my fault,
Upon my most unworthy self for this?

El. Lo. Leave to love others; 'twas some jealousy
That turn'd him desperate.

Lady. I'll be with you straight:
Are you wrung there? [Aside.

El. Lo. This works amain upon her.

Lady. I do confess there is a gentleman,
Has borne me long good will.

El. Lo. I do not like that. [Aside.

Lady. And vow'd a thousand services to me;
To me, regardless of him:

³⁷ ——— I would say more,

But grief is grown too great to be deliver'd.]

Curæ levis loquuntur, ingentes stupent.

Mr. Theobald.

346 THE SCORNFUL LADY.

But since Fate, that no power can withstand,
Has taken from me my first, and best love,
And to weep away my youth is a mere folly,
I will shew you what I determine, Sir;
You shall know all.

Call Mr. Welford, there: That gentleman
I mean to make the model of my fortunes,
And, in his chaste embraces, keep alive
The memory of my lost lovely Loveless.
He is somewhat like him too.

El. Lo. Then you can love?

Lady. Yes, certainly, Sir:
Though it please you to think me hard and cruel,
I hope I shall persuade you otherwise.

El. Lo. I have made myself a fine fool.

Enter Welford.

Wel. Would you have spoken with me, madam?

Lady. Yes, Mr. Welford; and I ask your pardon,
Before this gentleman, for being froward:
This kifs, and henceforth more affection.

El. Lo. So; it is better I were drown'd indeed.

Wel. This is a sudden passion; God hold it!
This fellow, out of his fear, sure, has
Persuaded her. I'll give him a new suit on't.

Lady. A parting kifs; and, good Sir, let me pray
you
To wait me in the gallery.

Wel. I'm in another world!
Madam, where you please.

[*Exit Wel.*

El. Lo. I will to sea,
And 't shall go hard but I'll be drown'd indeed.

Lady. Now, Sir, you see I am no such hard-hearted
creature,
But time may win me.

El. Lo. You have forgot your lost love.

Lady. Alas, Sir, what would you have me do?
I cannot call him back again with sorrow:
I'll love this man as dearly; and, beshrew me,

I'll

I'll keep him far enough from sea.
And 'twas told me, now I remember me,
By an old wise woman, that my first love
Should be drowned; and see, 'tis come about.

El. Lo. I would she had told you your second
Should be hang'd too, and let that come about;
But this is very strange.

Lady. Faith, Sir, consider all,
And then I know you will be of my mind:
If weeping could redeem him, I would weep still.

El. Lo. But, say, that I were Loveless,
And scap'd the storm; how would you answer this?

Lady. Why, for that gentleman I would leave all the
world.

El. Lo. This young thing too?

Lady. This young thing too,
Or any young thing else. Why, I would lose my state.

El. Lo. Why, then, he lives still: I am he, your
Loveless!

Lady. Alas, I knew it, Sir, and for that purpose
Prepar'd this pageant. Get you to your task,
And leave these players' tricks, or I shall leave you;
Indeed, I shall. Travel, or know me not.

El. Lo. Will you then marry?

Lady. I will not promise; take your choice. Farewell.

El. Lo. There is no other purgatory but a woman!
I must do something. [Exit Loveless.]

Enter Welford.

Wel. Mistress, I am bold.

Lady. You are, indeed.

Wel. You so o'erjoy'd me, Lady!

Lady. Take heed, you surfeit not; pray fast, and
welcome.

Wel. By this light, you love me extremely.

Lady. By this, and to-morrow's light, I care not
for you.

Wel. Come, come, you cannot hide it.

Lady. Indeed I can, where you shall never find it.

Wel.

348 THE SCORNFUL LADY.

Wel. I like this mirth well, Lady.

Lady. You shall have more on't.

Wel. I must kiss you.

Lady. No, Sir.

Wel. Indeed, I must.

Lady. What must be, must be. I will take my leave:
You have your parting blow. I pray commend me
To those few friends you have, that sent you hither,
And tell them, when you travel next, 'twere fit
You brought less brav'ry with you, and more wit;
You'll never get a wife else.

Wel. Are you in earnest?

Lady. Yes, faith. Will you eat, Sir?
Your horses will be ready straight; you shall have
A napkin laid in the buttery for you.

Wel. Do not you love me, then?

Lady. Yes, for that face.

Wel. It is a good one, Lady.

Lady. Yes, if 'twere not warpt;
The fire in time may mend it.

Wel. Methinks, yours is none of the best, Lady.

Lady. No, by my troth, Sir; yet, o' my conscience,
You would make shift with it.

Wel. Come, pray, no more of this.

Lady. I will not: Fare you well. Ho! who's
within there?

Bring out the gentleman's horses; he's in haste;
And set some cold meat on the table.

Wel. I have too much of that, I thank you, Lady:
Take to your chamber when you please, there goes
A black one with you, Lady.

Lady. Farewell, young man! [*Exit Lady.*]

Wel. You have made me one. Farewell; and may
the curse of a great house fall upon thee; I mean, the
butler! The devil and all his works are in these wo-
men. 'Would all of my sex were of my mind; I
would make 'em a new Lent, and a long one, that
flesh might be in more rev'ence with them.

Enter

THE SCORNFUL LADY. 349

Enter Abigail to him.

Abig. I am sorry, Mr. Welford——

Wel. So am I, that you are here.

Abig. How does my lady use you?

Wel. As I would use you, scurvily.

Abig. I should have been more kind, Sir.

Wel. I should have been undone then. Pray, leave me,

And look t' your sweet-meats. Hark, your lady calls.

Abig. Sir, I shall borrow so much time, without offence.

Wel. You're nothing but offence; for God's love, leave me.

Abig. 'Tis strange, my lady should be such a tyrant.

Wel. To send you to me. 'Pray, go stitch; good, do! You are more trouble to me than a term.

Abig. I do not know how my good will, if I said love I lied not, should any ways deserve this.

Wel. A thousand ways, a thousand ways! Sweet creature, let me depart in peace.

Abig. What creature, Sir? I hope I am a woman.

Wel. A hundred, I think, by your noise.

Abig. Since you are angry, Sir, I'm bold to tell you That I'm a woman, and a rib.

Wel. Of a roasted horse.

Abig. Construe me that.

Wel. A dog can do it better³⁸. Farewell, Countess; and commend me to your lady; tell her she's proud, and scurvy: And so I commit you both to your tempter.

Abig. Sweet Mr. Welford!

Wel. Avoid, old Satanas! Go daub your ruins, Your face looks fouler than a storm:

³⁸ *A dog can do it better; farewell, Countess.] This is not complimentary, but sarcastically spoken. In a pack of hounds, an old staunch hunting-bitch is often call'd Duckess, Countess, Beauty, &c.*

Mr. Theobald.

350 THE SCORNFUL LADY.

The footman stays you in the lobby, Lady.

Abig. If you were a gentleman, I should know it by your gentle conditions. Are these fit words to give a gentlewoman?

Wel. As fit as they were made for you.
Sirrah, my horses! Farewell, old adage!
Keep your nose warm; the rheum will make it horn
else. [Exit Wel.]

Abig. The blessings of a prodigal young heir
Be thy companions, Welford! Marry, come up, my
gentleman,
Are your gums grown so tender they can't bite?
A skittish filly will be your fortune,
Welford, and fair enough for such a packfaddle.
And I doubt not (if my aim hold)
To see her made to amble to your hand. [Exit Abig.]
*Enter Young Loveless, and comrades, Morecraft, Widow,
Savil, and the rest.*

Capt. Save thy brave shoulder, my young puissant
knight!

And may thy back-sword bite them to the bone
That love thee not: Thou art an errant man³⁹;
Go on: The circumcis'd shall fall by thee.
Let land and labour fill the man that tills;
Thy sword must be thy plough; and Jove it speed!
Mecha shall sweat, and Mahomet shall fall,
And thy dear name fill up his monument.

Yo. Lo. It shall, Captain; I mean to be a worthy.

Capt. One worthy is too little; thou shalt be all.

Mor. Captain, I shall deserve some of your love too.

Capt. Thou shalt have heart and hand too, noble
Morecraft,

If thou wilt lend me money.

I am a man of garrison; be rul'd,

And open to me those infernal gates,

³⁹ ———— *thou art an errant man,*

*Go on. The circumcis'd shall fall by thee.] i. e. A knight-errant;
one fit to go on the holy wars; to fight against the Turks and Jews.*

Mr. Theobald.

Whence

THE SCORNFUL LADY. 351

Whence none of thy evil angels pass again,
And I will style thee noble, nay, Don Diego;
I'll wooe thy infanta for thee, and my knight
Shall feast her with high meats, and make her apt.

Mor. Pardon me, Captain, you're beside my meaning.

Yo. Lo. No, Mr. Morecraft, 'tis the Captain's
meaning,

I should prepare her for ye.

Capt. Or provoke her.

Speak, my modern man, I say 'provoke her.'

Poet. Captain, I say so too; or stir her to it.
So say the critics.

Yo. Lo. But howsoever you expound it, Sir,
She's very welcome; and this shall serve for witness.
And, Widow, since you're come so happily,
You shall deliver up the keys, and free
Possession of this house, while I stand by to ratify.

Wid. I had rather give it back again, believe me;
It is a misery to say, you had it. Take heed.

Yo. Lo. 'Tis past that, Widow. Come, sit down.
Some wine there!

There is a scurvy banquet, if we had it.
Mr. Morecraft, all this fair house is yours, Sir. Savil!

Sav. Yes, Sir.

Yo. Lo. Are your keys ready? I must ease your
burden.

Sav. I'm ready, Sir, to be undone, when you
Shall call me to't.

Yo. Lo. Come, come, thou shalt live better.

Sav. I shall have less to do, that's all:
There's half a dozen of my friends i'th' fields,
Sunning against a bank, with half a breech
Among 'em; I shall be with 'em shortly.
The care and continual vexation

⁴² *There is a scurvy banquet, if we had it. All this fair house is yours, Sir Savil?*] Thus the modern editions most nonsensically exhibit this passage; omitting 'Mr. Morecraft,' whom Young Loveless must be addressing. Some of the old editions also omit these words, but yet read sensibly, '*All this fair house is yours, Sir. Savil?*'

352 THE SCORNFUL LADY.

Of being rich, eat up this rascal !

What shall become of my poor family ?

They are no sheep, yet they must keep themselves.

Yo. Lo. Drink, master Morecraft ! Pray be merry all.

Nay, an you will not drink, there's no society.

Captain, speak loud, and drink ! Widow, a word.

Capt. Expound her thoroughly, knight.

Here, God 'o gold, here's to thy fair possessions !

Be a baron, and a bold one.

Leave off your tickling of young heirs like trouts,

And let thy chimnies smoke. Feed men of war,

Live, and be honest, and be saved yet.

Mor. I thank you, worthy Captain, for your counsel.

You keep your chimnies smoking there, your nostrils ;

And, when you can, you feed a man of war.

This makes you not a baron, but a bare one ;

And how or when you shall be saved, let

The clerk o' th' company (you have commanded)

Have a just care of.

Poet. The man is much mov'd⁴¹. Be not angry,
Sir.

But, as the poet sings⁴², let your displeasure

Be a short fury, and go out. You have spoke home,

And bitterly to me, Sir. Captain, take truce ;

The miser is a tart and a witty whorson !

Capt. Poet, you feign, perdie ! The wit of this man
Lies in his fingers ends ; he must tell all.

His tongue fills his mouth like a neat's tongue,

And only serves to lick his hungry chaps

After a purchase : His brains and brimstone are

The Devil's diet to a fat usurer's head.

To her, knight, to her ! clap her aboard, and stow her.

⁴¹ *The man is much mov'd &c.*] We are inclined to believe, this one speech was intended for three ; and that the Captain should have the words, *You have spoke home and bitterly to me, Sir.* Mr. Seward would read, *And bitterly* too, Miser. We have not ventured to depart from our authorities, in favour of either suggestion.

⁴² *But, as the poet sings, let your displeasure be a short fury.*] The Poet, alluded to here, is Horace.

Ira furor brevis est. —

Mr. Theobald.

Where's

Where's the brave steward ?

Sav. Here's your poor friend and servant, Savil,
Sir ⁴³.

Capt. Away, thou'rt rich in tenements of nature :
First, in thy face, thou hast a serious face,
A betting, bargaining, and saving face,
A rich face; pawn it to the usurer;
A face to kindle the compassion
Of the most ignorant and frozen justice.

Sav. 'Tis such, I shall not dare to shew it shortly,
Sir.

Capt. Be blithe and bonny, Steward. Master
Morecraft,
Drink to this man of reckoning.

Mor. Here's e'en to him.

Sav. The devil guide it downward ! 'Would there
were in't

An acre of the great broom-field he bought,
To sweep your dirty conscience, or to choke you !

'Tis all one to me, usurer.

To. Lo. Consider what I told you ; you are young,
Unapt for worldly business : Is it fit
One of such tenderness, so delicate,
So contrary to things of care, should stir
And break her better meditations,
In the bare brokage of a brace of angels ?
Or a new kirtel, though it be of sattin ?
Eat by the hope of surfeits, and lie down
Only in expectation of a morrow,
That may undo some easy-hearted fool,
Or reach a widow's curses ; let out money,
Whose use returns the principal ? and get,
Out of these troubles, a consuming heir ;
For such a one must follow necessarily.
You shall die hated, if not old and miserable ;
And that possess'd wealth, that you got with pining,

⁴³ *Here's your poor friend and Savil, Sir.]* Mr. Seward recommends inserting the word *servant* in this passage.

354 THE SCORNFUL LADY.

Live to see tumbled to another's hands,
That is no more a-kin to you, than you
To his coz'nage!

Wid. Sir, you speak well: 'Would God,
That charity had first begun here.

Yo. Lo. 'Tis yet time. Be merry!
Methinks, you want wine there; there's more i' th'
house.

Captain, where rests the health?

Capt. It shall go round, boy!

Yo. Lo. Say, can you suffer this, because the end
Points at much profit? Can you so far bow
Below your blood, below your too-much beauty,
To be a partner of this fellow's bed,
And lie with his diseases? If you can,
I will not press you further. Yet look upon him:
There's nothing in that hide-bound usurer,
That man of mat, that all-decay'd⁴⁴, but akes,
For you to love, unless his perish'd lungs,
His dry cough, or his scurvy. This is truth,
And so far I dare speak it: He has yet,
Past cure of physick, spaw, or any diet,
A primitive pox in his bones; and, o' my knowledge,
He has been ten times rowell'd: You may love him.
He had a bastard, his own toward issue,
Whipp'd, and then crop'd, for washing out the roses
In three-farthings, to make 'em pence.

Wid. I do not like these morals.

Yo. Lo. You must not like him, then.

Enter Elder Loveless.

El. Lo. By your leave, gentlemen.

Yo. Lo. By my troth, Sir, you're welcome; wel-
come, faith.

Lord, what a stranger you are grown! Pray, know
This gentlewoman; and, if you please, these friends
here.

⁴⁴ *That all decay'd.*] I read, says Mr. Seward, *that all decay.*

THE SCORNFUL LADY. 355

We are merry ; you see the worst on's ;
Your house has been kept warm, Sir ⁴⁵.

El. Lo. I am glad
To hear it, brother ; pray God, you are wise too !

Yo. Lo. Pray, Mr. Morecraft, know my elder brother ;

And, Captain, do your compliment. Savil,
I dare swear, is glad at heart to see you.

Lord, we heard, Sir, you were drown'd at sea,
And see how luckily things come about !

Mor. This money must be paid back again, Sir.

Yo. Lo. No, Sir ;
Pray keep the sale ; 'twill make good tailors' measures.
I am well, I thank you.

Wid. By my troth, the gentleman
Has stew'd him in his own sauce ; I shall love him
for't.

Sav. I know not where I am, I am so glad.
Your worship is the welcom'st man alive :
Upon my knees I bid you welcome home.
Here has been such a hurry, such a din,
Such dismal drinking, swearing, and whoring,
'T has almost made me mad :
We've liv'd in a continual Turnbal-Street ⁴⁶.

Sir,

⁴⁵ *Your house has been kept warm, Sir.*

El. Lo. I'm glad to hear it, brother ; pray God, you are wise too ?]
This would be a very odd reply, did it not depend on a proverbial
expression, ' If you are *wise*, keep yourself *warm*.' So in Shake-
speare's *Much Ado about Nothing*,

So that if he has wit enough to keep himself warm, &c.

And, again, in his *Taming of the Shrew* :

Pet. *Am I not wise ?*

Kath. *Yes ; keep you warm.*

Mr. Theobald.

⁴⁶ *We've liv'd in a continual Turnbal-Street*] *Turnbal*, or rather
Turnbull-Street, is mentioned in Shakespeare's *Henry IV.* part ii.
It appears to have been a place of very ill repute at the period in
which our Authors wrote. In an old comedy, called *Ram-Alley*, or
Merry Tricks, it is mentioned again :

———*Sir, get you gone,*

You swaggering, cheating, Turnbull-Street rogue.

356 THE SCORNFUL LADY.

Sir, blest be Heav'n, that sent you safe again;
Now shall I eat, and go to bed again.

El. Lo. Brother, dismiss these people.

Yo. Lo. Captain, begone a-while; meet me at my old rendezvous in the evening; take your small poet with you. Mr. Morecraft, you were best go prattle with your learned counsel; I shall preserve your money: I was cozen'd when time was; we are quit, Sir.

Wid. Better and better still.

El. Lo. What is this fellow, brother?

Yo. Lo. The thirsty usurer that sup'd my land off.

El. Lo. What does he tarry for?

Yo. Lo. To be landlord of your house and state: I was bold to make a little sale, Sir.

Mor. Am I o'er-reach'd? If there be law, I'll hamper ye.

El. Lo. Prithee, be gone, and rave at home; thou art so base a fool I cannot laugh at thee.

Sirrah, this comes of coz'ning! home, and spare;
Eat raddish 'till you raise your fums again.

If you stir far in this, I'll have you whip'd,
Your ears nail'd, for intelligencing, o' th' pillory,
And your goods forfeit! You're a stale cozener?
Leave my house. No more!

Mor. A pox upon your house!

Come, Widow, I shall yet hamper this young gamester.

Nash, in *Pierce Penniless* his Supplication, commends the *Wid. of Turnbull-Street* to the patronage of the Devil. In the *Inner Temple Masque*, by Middleton, 1619,

*'Tis in your charge to pull down bawdy-houses,
——— cause spoil in Shoreditch,
And deface Turnbull.*

Again, in Middleton's comedy called *Any Thing for a Quiet Life*, a French bawd says, '*J'ay une fille qui parle un peu François elle conviendra avec vous, a la Fleur de Lys en Turnbull-Street.*' Again, in the *Knight of the Burning Pestle*, by our Authors,

*——— This, my lady dear,
I stole her from her friends in Turnbull Street.*

Turnbull, or *Turnmill-Street*, is near Cow-Cross, West-Smithfield.

Mr. Steevens.

Wid.

THE SCORNFUL LADY. 357

Wid. Good twelve i' th' hundred, keep your way ;
I am not for your diet : Marry in your own tribe,
Jew, and get a broker.

Yo. Lo. 'Tis well said, Widow. Will you jog on,
Sir ?

Mor. Yes, I will go ; but 'tis no matter whither :
But when I trust a wild fool, and a woman,
May I lend gratis, and build hospitals ! [Exit.

Yo. Lo. Nay, good Sir, make all even :
Here's a widow wants your good word for me ;
She's rich, and may renew me and my fortunes.

El. Lo. I'm glad you look before you. Gentlewo-
man,

Here is a poor distressed younger brother.

Wid. You do him wrong, Sir ; he's a knight.

El. Lo. I ask you mercy : Yet, it is no matter ;
His knighthood's no inheritance, I take it.
Whatsoever he is, he is your servant,
Or would be, lady.

Faith, be not merciless, but make a man ;
He's young and handsome, though he be my brother,
And his observance may deserve your love :
He shall not fall for means.

Wid. Sir, you speak like a worthy brother :
And so much do I credit your fair language,
That I shall love your brother ; and so love him——
But I shall blush to say more.

El. Lo. Stop her mouth.

I hope you shall not live to know that hour,
When this shall be repented. Now, brother, I should
chide ;

But I'll give no distaste to your fair mistress.
I will instruct her in't, and she shall do't :
You have been wild and ignorant ; pray, mend it.

Yo. Lo. Sir, every day, now spring comes on.

El. Lo. To you, good Mr. Savil, and your office,
Thus much I have to say : You're from my steward
Become, first, your own drunkard, then his bawd :
They say, you're excellent grown in both, and perfect.
Give me your keys, Sir Savil.

358 THE SCORNFUL LADY.

Sav. Good Sir, consider whom you left me to.

El. Lo. I left you as a curb for, not to provoke,
My brother's follies. Where's the best drink, now?
Come tell me, Savil; where's the soundest whores?
You old he-goat, you dried ape, you lame stallion!
Must you be leaping in my house? Your whores,
Like fairies, dance their night-rounds, without fear
Either of king or constable, within my walls.

Are all my hangings safe? my sheep unfold yet?
I hope my plate is current; I have too much on't.
What say you to three hundred pounds in drink now?

Sav. Good Sir, forgive me, and but hear me speak.

El. Lo. Methinks, thou shouldst be drunk still, and
not speak;

'Tis the more pardonable.

Sav. I will, Sir, if you will have it so.

El. Lo. I thank you: Yes, e'en pursue it, Sir. Do
you hear?

Get you a whore soon for your recreation;
Go look out captain Broken-breech, your fellow,
And quarrel, if you dare. I shall deliver
These keys to one shall have more honesty,
Though not so much fine wit, Sir. You may walk
And gather cresses, Sir, to cool your liver;
There's something for you to begin a diet,
You'll have the pox else. Speed you well, Sir Savil!
You may eat at my house to preserve life;
But keep no fornication in the stables.

[*Ex. omnes pr. Savil.*]

Sav. Now must I hang myself⁴⁷; my friends will
look for't.

Eating and sleeping, I do despise you both now:
I will run mad first, and, if that get not pity,
I'll drown myself, to a most dismal ditty. [*Exit Savil.*]

⁴⁷ *Now must I hang myself, &c.*] This Play, more than any other
of our Authors, abounds with satirical sneers against our great drama-
tic Poet, Shakespeare. These concluding lines very plainly were in-
tended to ridicule the catastrophe of Ophelia, in the tragedy of
Hamlet. R.

A C T IV.

Enter Abigail, sola.

Abig. **A**LAS, poor gentlewoman, to what a misery hath age brought thee, to what a scurvy fortune! Thou that hast been companion for noblemen, and at the worst of those times for gentlemen; now, like a broken serving-man, must beg for favour to those, that would have crawl'd like pilgrims to my chamber, but for an apparition of me. You that be coming on, make much of fifteen, and so till five-and-twenty: Use your time with reverence, that your profits may arise: It will not tarry with you; *ecce signum*. Here was a face:
 But Time, that, like a surfeit, eats our youth
 (Plague of his iron teeth, and draw 'em for't!)
 Has been a little bolder here than welcome;
 And now, to say the truth, I am fit for no man.
 Old men i'th' house, of fifty, call me Granum;
 And when they are drunk, e'en then, when Joan and
 my lady
 Are all one, not one will do me reason.
 My little Levite hath forsaken me;
 His silver found of ⁴⁸ cithern quite abolish'd;
 His doleful hymns under my chamber-window,
 Digested into tedious learning.
 Well, fool, you leap'd a haddock when you left
 him;
 He's a clean man, and a good edifier,
 And twenty nobles is his state *de claro*,
 Besides his pigs *in posse*.
 To this good homilitt I have been ever stubborn,

⁴⁸ *Cithern*.] A kind of harp.

360 THE SCORNFUL LADY.

Which God forgive me for, and mend my manners :
And, Love, if ever thou hadst care of forty ⁴⁸,
Of such a piece of laye ground, hear my pray'r,
And fire his zeal so far forth, that my faults,
In this renew'd impressiion of my love,
May shew corrected to our gentle reader.

Enter Roger.

See, how negligently he pass'es by me;
With what an equipage canonical,
As tho' he had broken the heart of Bellarmine,
Or added something to the singing brethren.
'Tis scorn, I know it, and deserve it. Master Roger !

Rog. Fair gentlewoman, my name is Roger.

Abig. Then, gentle Roger——

Rog. Ungentle Abigail !

Abig. Why, master Roger, will you set your wit
To a weak woman's ?

Rog. You are weak, indeed :
For to the poet sings.

Abig. I do confels
My weakness, sweet Sir Roger.

Rog. Good my lady's
Gentlewoman, or my good lady's gentlewoman,
(This trope is lost to you now) leave your prating,
You have a season of your first mother in you :
And, surely, had the Devil been in love,
He had been abused too. Go, Dalilah;
You make men fools, and wear fig-breeches.

Abig. Well, well, hard-hearted man, you may dilate
Upon the weak infirmities of women :
These are fit texts : But once, there was a time——
'Would I had never seen those eyes, those eyes,
Those orient eyes !

⁴⁸ *And, Love, if ever thou hadst care of forty,
Of such a piece of laye ground, hear my prayer.*] I believe there
is no such term in the English tongue, as *laye ground*. The word
must have been *lay*, or *ley*: *i. e. terra inculta, novale*: unplowed,
uncultivated, land.

Mr. Symphon.

Rog.

THE SCORNFUL LADY. 361

Rog. Ay, they were pearls once with you.

Abig. Saving your reverence, Sir, so they are still.

Rog. Nay, nay, I do beseech you, leave your cogging!

What they are, they are:

They serve me without spectacles, I thank 'em.

Abig. Oh, will you kill me?

Rog. I do not think I can;

You're like a copy-hold, with nine lives in't.

Abig. You were wont to bear a Christian fear about you:

For your own worship's sake——

Rog. I was a Christian fool then!

Do you remember what a dance you led me?

How I grew qualm'd in love, and was a dunce?

Could not expound but once a quarter, and then was out too:

And then, out of the stinking stir you put me in,

I pray'd for my own royal issue. You do

Remember all this?

Abig. Oh, be as then you were.

Rog. I thank you for it:

Surely, I will be wiser, Abigail;

And, as the Ethnick poet sings,

I will not lose my oil and labour too ⁴⁹.

You're for the worshipful, I take it, Abigail?

Abig. Oh, take it so, and then I am for thee.

Rog. I like these tears well, and this humbling also;

They are symptoms of contrition, as a Father saith.

If I should fall into my fit again,

Would you not shake me into a quotidian coxcomb?

Would you not use me scurvily again,

And give me possets with purging comfits in 'em?

I tell thee, gentlewoman, thou hast been harder to me,

Than a long chapter with a pedigree.

Abig. Oh, curate, cure me!

⁴⁹ *I will not lose my oil and labour too.*] The Ethnick poet here alluded to is Plautus, in his *Pænulus*;

Tum pol ego & oleum & operam perdidit. Mr. Theobald.

I will

362 THE SCORNFUL LADY.

I will love thee better, dearer, longer;
I will do any thing; betray the secrets
Of the main household to thy reformation.
My lady shall look lovingly on thy learning;
And when due time shall point thee for a parson,
I will convert thy eggs to penny custards,
And thy tithe goose shall graze and multiply.

Rog. I am mollified,
As well shall testify this faithful kiss,
But have a great care, mistress Abigail,
How you depress the spirit any more
With your rebukes and mocks; for, certainly,
The edge of such a folly cuts itself.

Abig. Oh, Sir, you've pierc'd me thorough. Here
I vow

A recantation to those malicious faults
I ever did against you. Never more
Will I despise your learning; never more
Pin cards and cony-tails upon your cassock;
Never again reproach your reverend night-cap,
And call it by the mangy name of Murrion;
Never your reverend person, more, and say,
You look like one of Baal's priests i' th' hanging;
Never again, when you say grace, laugh at you,
Nor put you out at prayers; never cramp you more
With the great Book of Martyrs; nor, when you ride,
Get rope and thistles for you. No, my Roger,
These faults shall be corrected and amended,
As by the tenor of my tears appears.

Rog. Now cannot I hold, if I should be hang'd;
I must cry too. Come to thine own beloved,
Abigail; and do e'en what thou wilt with me,
Sweet, sweet Abigail! I am thine own for ever:
Here's my hand. When Roger proves a recreant,
Hang him i' th' bell-ropes.

Enter Lady, and Martha.

Lady. Why, how now, master Roger, no pray'rs
down with you to-night? Did you hear the bell
ring?

THE SCORNFUL LADY. 363

ring? You are courting; your flock shall fat well for it.

Rog. I humbly ask your pardon.—I'll chop up pray'rs,
But stay a little, and be with you again. [*Exit.*]

Enter Elder Loveless.

Lady. How dare you, being so unworthy a fellow,
Presume to come to move me any more?

El. Lo. Ha, ha, ha!

Lady. What ails the fellow?

El. Lo. The fellow comes to laugh at you.
I tell you, Lady, I would not, for your land,
Be such a coxcomb, such a whining afs,
As you decreed me for when I was last here.

Lady. I joy to hear you are wise; 'tis a rare jewel
In an elder brother: Pray, be wiser yet.

El. Lo. Methinks, I'm very wise: I do not come
a-wooing.

Indeed, I'll move no more love to your ladyship.

Lady. What makes you here, then?

El. Lo. Only to see you, and be merry, Lady:
That's all my business. Faith, let's be very merry.
Where's little Roger? He is a good fellow.
An hour or two, well spent in wholesome mirth,
Is worth a thousand of these puling passions.
'Tis an ill world for lovers.

Lady. They were never fewer.

El. Lo. I thank God, there is one less for me, Lady.

Lady. You were never any, Sir.

El. Lo. Till now, and now
I am the prettiest fellow!

Lady. You talk like a taylor, Sir.

El. Lo. Methinks, your faces are no such fine
things now.

Lady. Why did you tell me you were wise?
Lord, what a lying age is this! Where will
You mend these faces?

El. Lo. A hog's face, fous'd, is worth a hundred
of 'em.

Lady.

364 THE SCORNFUL LADY.

Lady. Sure, you had a sow to your mother.

El. Lo. She brought such fine white pigs as you, fit for none but parsons, Lady.

Lady. 'Tis well you will allow us our clergy yet.

El. Lo. That will not save you. Oh, that I were in love again with a wish!

Lady. By this light, you are a scurvy fellow! Pray, be gone.

El. Lo. You know, I am a clean-skin'd man.

Lady. Do I know it?

El. Lo. Come, come, you would know it; that's as good:

But not a snap, ne'er long for't, not a snap, dear Lady.

Lady. Hark ye, Sir, hark ye, get you to the suburbs; There's horse-flesh for such hounds. Will you go, Sir?

El. Lo. Lord, how I lov'd this woman! how I worship'd

This pretty calf with a white face here! As I live,
You were the prettiest fool to play withal,
The wittiest little varlet! It would talk;
Lord, how it talk'd! And when I angred it,
It would cry out, and scratch, and eat no meat,
And it would say, go hang.

Lady. It will say so still, if you anger it.

El. Lo. And when I ask'd it, if it would be married,
It sent me of an errand into France,
And would abuse me, and be glad it did so.

Lady. Sir, this is most unmanly; pray, be gone.

El. Lo. And swear (even when it twitter'd to be at me)
I was unhandsome.

Lady. Have you no manners in you?

El. Lo. And say my back was melted, when Heaven
knows,

I kept it at a charge, four Flanders mares
Would have been easier to me, and a fencer.

Lady. You think all this is true now?

El. Lo. Faith, whether it be or no, it is too good
for you.

But, so much for our mirth: Now have at you in
earnest.

Lady.

THE SCORNFUL LADY. 365

Lady. There is enough, Sir; I desire no more.

El. Lo. Yes, faith, we'll have a cast at your best parts now; and then the devil take the worst!

Lady. Pray, Sir, no more; I am not so much affected with your commendations. 'Tis almost dinner; I know they stay for you at the ordinary.

El. Lo. E'en a short grace, and then I am gone:
You are a woman!
And the proudest that ever lov'd a coach:
The scornful'st, scurviest, and most senseless woman!
The greediest to be prais'd, and never mov'd,
Though it be gross and open; the most envious,
That, at the poor fame of another's face,
Would eat your own, and more than is your own,
The paint belonging to it: Of such a self-opinion,
That you think no one can deserve your glove:
And, for your malice, you're so excellent,
You might have been your tempter's tutor. Nay,
Never cry.

Lady. Your own heart knows you wrong me:
I cry for you!

El. Lo. You shall before I leave you.

Lady. Is all this spoke in earnest?

El. Lo. Yes, and more, as soon as I can get it out.

Lady. Well, out with't.

El. Lo. You are——let me see——

Lady. One that has us'd you with too much respect.

El. Lo. One that hath us'd me, since you will have it so,

The basest, the most foot-boy-like, without respect
Of what I was, or what you might be by me.
You have us'd me as I would use a jade,
Ride him off's legs, then turn him to the commons;
You have us'd me with discretion, and I thank you;
If you have many more such pretty servants,
Pray build an hospital, and, when they are old,
Pray keep 'em, for shame.

Lady. I cannot think yet this is serious.

El. Lo.

366 THE SCORNFUL LADY.

El. Lo. Will you have more on't?

Lady. No, faith, there's enough,
If it be true: Too much, by all my part.
You are no lover, then?

El. Lo. No, I had rather be a carrier.

Lady. Why, the Gods amend all!

El. Lo. Neither do I think

There can be such a fellow found i'th' world,
To be in love with such a froward woman:
If there be such, they're mad; Jove comfort 'em!
Now have you all, and I as new a man,
As light, and spirited, that I feel myself
Clean through another creature. Oh, 'tis brave
To be one's own man! I can see you now
As I would see a picture; sit all day
By you, and never kiss your hand: Hear you sing,
And never fall backward; but, with as set a temper
As I would hear a fidler, rise and thank you.
I can now keep my money in my purse,
That still was gadding out for scarfs and waistcoats:
And keep my hand from mercers' sheep-skins finely.
I can eat mutton now, and feast myself
With my two shillings, and can see a play
For eighteen-pence again: I can, my lady, I can.

Lady. The carriage of this fellow vexes me. Sir,
Pray let me speak a little private with you.
I must not suffer this.

El. Lo. Ha, ha, ha! What would you with me?
You will not ravish me? Now, your set speech.

Lady. Thou perjur'd man!

El. Lo. Ha, ha, ha! this is a fine *exordium*.
And why, I pray you, perjur'd?

Lady. Did you not swear
A thousand thousand times, you lov'd me best
Of all things?

El. Lo. I do confess it: Make your best of that.

Lady. Why do you say you do not, then?

El. Lo. Nay, I'll swear it.

And give sufficient reason; your own usage.

Lady.

THE SCORNFUL LADY. 367

Lady. Do you not love me now, then?

El. Lo. No, faith.

Lady. Did you ever think I lov'd you dearly?

El. Lo. Yes; but I see but rotten fruits on't.

Lady. Do not deny your hand, for I must kiss it,
And take my last farewell: Now let me die,
So you be happy.

El. Lo. I am too foolish: Lady, speak, dear lady!

Lady. No, let me die. *[She swoons.]*

Mar. Oh, my sister!

Abig. Oh, my lady! Help, help!

Mar. Run for some *rosa solis*!

El. Lo. I have play'd the fine ass! Bend her body,
lady!

Best, dearest, worthiest lady, hear your servant.

I am not as I shew'd! Oh, wretched fool,

To fling away the jewel of thy life thus!

Give her more air. See, she begins to stir:

Sweet mistress, hear me.

Lady. Is my servant well?

El. Lo. In being yours, I am so.

Lady. Then I care not.

El. Lo. How do you? Reach a chair there. I
confess

My fault not pardonable, in pursuing thus,

Upon such tenderness, my wilful error:

But had I known it would have wrought thus with you,

Thus strangely, not the world had won me to it.

And let not, my best Lady, any word,

Spoke to my end, disturb your quiet peace;

For sooner shall you know a general ruin,

Than my faith broken. Do not doubt this, mistress;

For, by my life, I cannot live without you.

Come, come, you shall not grieve; rather be angry,

And heap infliction on me; I will suffer.

Oh, I could curse myself! Pray, smile upon me.

Upon my faith, 'twas but a trick to try you,

Knowing you lov'd me dearly, and yet strangely,

That

368 THE SCORNFUL LADY.

That you would never shew it, though my means
Was all humility ⁵⁰.

All. Ha, ha, ha!

El. Lo. How now?

Lady. I thank you, fine fool, for your most fine plot:
This was a subtle one, a stiff device
To have caught dottrels with. Good senseless Sir,
Could you imagine I should swoon for you,
And know yourself to be an arrant ass;
Ay, a discover'd one? 'Tis quit; I thank you, Sir.
Ha, ha, ha!

Mar. Take heed, Sir; she may chance to swoon
again.

All. Ha, ha, ha!

Abig. Step to her, Sir; see, how she changes colour.

El. Lo. I'll go to Hell first, and be better welcome.
I am fool'd, I do confess it; finely fool'd,
Lady; fool'd, madam; and I thank you for it!

Lady. Faith, 'tis not so much worth, Sir:
But if I knew when you come next a-birding,
I'll have a stronger noose to hold the woodcock.

All. Ha, ha, ha!

El. Lo. I am glad to see you merry: Pray laugh on.

Mar. H'ad a hard heart, that could not laugh at
you, Sir.

Ha, ha, ha!

Lady. Pray, sister, do not laugh; you'll anger
him,

And then he'll rail like a rude costermonger,
That school-boys had cozen'd of his apples,
As loud and senseless.

El. Lo. I will not rail.

Mar. Faith, then let's hear him, sister.

⁵⁰ *Though my means was all humanity.*] This is the reading of the modern editions; the old ones say, *humility*. Mr. Seward (who mentions it in his Postscript) not comprehending the passage, proposes two or three variations, which seem to us totally unnecessary, as the meaning obviously is, 'I knew you loved me, though you would never shew it, notwithstanding I used the *humblest* means to induce you to do it.'

El. Lo.

THE SCORNFUL LADY. 369

El. Lo. Yes, you shall hear me.

Lady. Shall we be the better by it, then?

El. Lo. No; he that makes a woman better by his words,

I'll have him fainted: Blows will not do it.

Lady. By this light, he'll beat us.

El. Lo. You do deserve it richly,
And may live to have a beadle do it.

Lady. Now he rails.

El. Lo. Come, scornful Folly,
If this be railing, you shall hear me rail.

Lady. Pray put it in good words, then.

El. Lo. The worst are good enough for such a trifle,
Such a proud piece of cobweb-lawn.

Lady. You bite, Sir.

El. Lo. I would till the bones crack'd, an I had
my will.

Mar. We had best muzzle him; he grows mad.

El. Lo. I would 'twere lawful, in the next great
sickness,

To have the dogs spar'd, those harmless creatures,
And knock o' th' head those hot continual plagues,
Women, that are more infectious. I hope
The state will think on't.

Lady. Are you well, Sir?

Mar. He looks

As though he had a grievous fit o' th' cholic.

El. Lo. Green-ginger will cure me.

Abig. I'll heat a trencher for him.

El. Lo. Dirty December, do;

Thou, with a face as old as Erra Pater;
Such a prognosticating nose: Thou thing,
That ten years since has left to be a woman,
Out-worn the expectation of a bawd;
And thy dry bones can reach at nothing now,
But gords or ninepins⁵¹, pray go fetch a trencher, go.

⁵¹ But gords] i. e. instruments of game then in common use. We meet with the same term again in Shakespeare's *Merry Wives of Windsor*: *If gord and fullam holds.* *Mr. Seward.*

370 THE SCORNFUL LADY.

Lady. Let him alone; he's crack'd.

Abig. I'll see him hang'd first; he's a beastly fellow,
To use a woman of my breeding thus;
Ay, marry is he. Would I were a man,
I'd make him eat his knave's words.

El. Lo. Tie your she-otter up, good Lady Folly,
She stinks worse than a bear-baiting.

Lady. Why will you be angry now?

El. Lo. Go paint, and purge;
Call in your kennel with you. You a Lady?

Abig. Sirrah, look to't against the quarter-sessions:
If there be good behaviour in the world,
I'll have thee bound to it.

El. Lo. You must not seek it in your lady's house,
then.

Pray send this ferret home; and spin, good Abigail.
And, madam, that your ladyship may know,
In what base manner you have us'd my service,
I do from this hour hate you heartily;
And, tho' your folly should whip you to repentance,
And waken you at length to see my wrongs,
'Tis not the endeavour of your life shall win me;
Not all the friends you have, nor intercession,
Nor your submissive letters, though they spoke
As many tears as words; not your knees grown
To th' ground in penitence, nor all your state,
To kiss you; nor my pardon, nor my will
To give you Christian burial, if you die thus;
So, farewell.——

When I am married and made sure, I'll come
And visit you again, and vex you, Lady.
By all my hopes, I'll be a torment to you,
Worse than a tedious winter. I know you will
Recant and sue to me; but save that labour:
I'll rather love a fever and continual thirst,
Rather contract my youth to drink, and rather
Dote upon quarrels⁵²,

⁵² *Rather contract my youth to drink, and sacerdotie upon quarrels.*] In this unintelligible manner all the editions exhibit this passage, till that

THE SCORNFUL LADY. 371

Or take a drawn whore from an hospital,
That time, diseases, and Mercury had eaten,
Than to be drawn to love you.

Lady. Ha, ha, ha! Pray do; but take heed though.

El. Lo. From thee, false dice, jades, cowards, and
plaguy summers⁵³,
Good Lord deliver me! [Exit.

Lady. But hark you, servant, hark ye! Is he gone?
Call him again.

Abig. Hang him, paddock!

Lady. Art thou here still? Fly, fly,
And call my servant; fly, or never see me more.

Abig. I had rather knit again, than see that rascal,
But I must do it. [Exit Abigail.

Lady. I would be loth to anger him too much.
What fine foolery is this in a woman,
To use those men most frowardly they love most?
If I should lose him thus, I were rightly serv'd.
I hope he's not so much himself, to take it
To th' heart. How now! Will he come back?

Enter Abigail.

Abig. Never, he swears, while he can hear men say
There's any woman living: He swore he would
Have me first.

Lady. Didst thou entreat him, wench?

that of 1750; when Mr. Sympson thought he supplied the chasm,
both in the sense and the verse, by the following reading:

*Rather contract my youth to drink and swagger,
Doat upon quarrels, or take a drawn whore from
An hospital, that time, diseases, and
Mercury had eaten, than, &c.*

We do not think his conjecture by any means happy. As the words
we have inserted come so near those of the old books, we hope we
have restored the original reading. It is true, an hemistich is left;
but hemistichs are common with our Authors. Probably, some words
have been quite lost.

⁵³ *And plaguy summers.*] 'I read, says Mr. Seward, *plague-sum-*
mers; i. e. Summers in which the plague rages' *Plaguy* clearly
conveying the same idea, we have followed the old books.

Abig. As well as I could, madam.

But this is still your way, to love being absent,
And when he's with you, laugh at him and abuse him.
There is another way, if you could hit on't.

Lady. Thou say'st true; get me paper, pen, and ink;
I'll write to him: I'd be loth he should sleep in's anger.
Women are most fools when they think they're wisest.

[*Exeunt.*

Musick. Enter *Young Loveless* and *Widow* (going to be married); with them his comrades.

Wid. Pray, Sir, cast off these fellows, as unfitting
For your bare knowledge, and far more your company.
Is't fit such ragamuffins as these are,
Should bear the name of friends, and furnish out
A civil house? You're to be married now;
And men, that love you, must expect a course
Far from your old career. If you will keep 'em,
Turn 'em to the stable, and there make 'em grooms:
And yet, now I consider it, such beggars
Once set o' horse-back, you have heard, will ride,
How far you had best to look to.

Capt. Hear you,
You that must be lady, pray content yourself,
And think upon your carriage soon at night,
What dressing will best take your knight, what waist-
coat,
What cordial will do well i' th' morning for him.
What triers have you?

Wid. What do you mean, Sir?

Capt. Those that must switch him up: If he start
well,
Fear not, but cry 'Saint George,' and bear him hard.
When you perceive his wind grows hot and wanting,
Let him a little down; he's fleet, ne'er doubt him,
And stands found.

Wid. Sir, you hear these fellows?

Yo. Lo. Merry companions, wench, merry com-
panions.

Wid.

THE SCORNFUL LADY. 373

Wid. To one another let 'em be companions,
But, good Sir, not to you : You shall be civil,
And slip off these base trappings.

Capt. He shall not need, my most sweet lady Grocer !
If he be civil, not your powder'd sugar,
Nor your raisins, shall persuade the Captain
To live a coxcomb with him. Let him be civil,
And eat i' th' Arches, and see what will come on't.

Poet. Let him be civil, do : Undo him ; ay, that's
the next way !

I will not take, if he be civil once,
Two hundred pounds a-year to live with him.
Be civil ! There's a trim persuasion.

Capt. If thou be'st civil, knight (as Jove defend it !)
Get thee another nose ; that will be pull'd
Off by the angry boys for thy conversion.
The children thou shalt get on this civilian
Cannot inherit by the law ; they're Ethnicks,
And all thy sport mere mortal lechery.
When they are grown, having but little in 'em,
They may prove haberdashers, or gross grocers,
Like their dear dam there ! Prithee be civil, knight ;
In time thou may'st read to thy household,
And be drunk once a-year : This would shew finely.

Yo. Lo. I wonder, sweetheart, you will offer this ;
You do not understand these gentlemen.
I will be short and pithy ; I had rather
Cast you off, by the way of charge. These are creatures,
That nothing goes to the maintenance of,
But corn and water. I will keep these fellows
Just in the competency of two hens.

Wid. If you can cast it so, Sir, you've my liking :
If they eat less, I should not be offended.
But how these, Sir, can live upon so little
As corn and water, I am unbelieving.

Yo. Lo. Why, prithee, sweetheart, what's your ale ?
Is not

That corn and water, my sweet widow ?

Wid. Ay ;

A a 3

But,

374 THE SCORNFUL LADY.

But, my sweet knight, where is the meat to this,
And cloaths, that they must look for?

Yo. Lo. In this short sentence 'ale,' is all included;
Meat, drink, and cloth. These are no rav'ning foot-
men,

No fellows, that at ordinaries dare
Eat their eighteen-pence thrice out before they rise,
And yet go hungry to a play, and crack
More nuts than would suffice a dozen squirrels;
Besides the din, which is most damnable:
I had rather rail, and be confin'd to a boat-maker,
Than live among such rascals. These are people
Of such a clean discretion in their diet,
Of such a moderate sustenance, that they sweat
If they but smell hot meat. Porridge is poison;
They hate a kitchen as they hate a counter,
And, shew 'em but a feather-bed, they swoon.
Ale is their eating and their drinking solely⁵⁴.
Which keeps their bodies clear, and soluble.
Bread is a binder, and for that abolish'd,
Even in their ale, whose lost room fills an apple,
Which is more airy and of subtler nature.
The rest they take is little, and that little
Is little easy; for, like strict men of order,
They do correct their bodies with a bench,
Or a poor stubborn table; if a chimney
Offer itself, with some few broken rushes,
They are in down. When they are sick, that's drunk,
They may have fresh straw; else they do despise
These worldly pamperings. For their poor apparel,
'Tis worn out to the diet; new they seek none;
And if a man should offer, they are angry,
Scarce to be reconcil'd again with him:
You shall not hear 'em ask one a cast doublet
Once in a year, which is a modesty

⁵⁴ *Ale is their eating and their drinking, surely.*] *Surely* seems a mere expletive here; but, I believe, the true word was *solely*; i. e. Ale is the only thing they desire to eat as well as drink.

Mr. Seward.

Befitting

THE SCORNFUL LADY. 375

Befitting my poor friends : You see their wardrobe,
Though slender, competent. For shirts, I take it,
They are things worn out of their remembrance.
Lousy they will be when they list, and mangy,
Which shews a fine variety ; and then, to cure 'em,
A tanner's limepit, which is little charge :
Two dogs, and these two, may be cur'd for three-pence.

Wid. You have half perswaded me ; pray, use your
pleasure :

And, my good friends, since I do know your diet,
I'll take an order meat shall not offend you ;
You shall have ale.

Capt. We ask no more, let it be mighty, Lady ;
And, if we perish, then our own sins on us.

Yo. Lo. Come, forward, gentlemen ; to church, my
boys !

When we have done, I'll give you cheer in bowls.

[*Exeunt.*]

A C T V.

Enter Elder Loveless.

El. Lo. **T**HIS senseless woman vexes me to th'
heart ;

She will not from my memory ! 'Would she were
A man for one two hours, that I might beat her.
If I had been unhandsome, old, or jealous,
'T had been an even lay she might have scorn'd me ;
But, to be young, and, by this light, I think,
As proper as the proudest ; made as clean,
As straight, and strong-back'd ; means and manners
equal

With the best cloth-of-silver Sir i' th' kingdom :
But these are things, at some time of the moon,
Below the cut of canvas. Sure, she has

A a 4

Some

376 THE SCORNFUL LADY.

Some meeching rascal in her house⁵⁵, some hind,
That she hath seen bear, like another Milo,
Quarters of malt upon his back, and sing with 't;
Thresh all day, and i' th' evening, in his stockings,
Strike up a hornpipe, and there stink two hours,
And ne'er a whit the worse man. These are they,
These steel-chin'd rascals, that undo us all.
'Would I had been a carter, or a coachman,
I had done the deed ere this time.

Enter servant.

Ser. Sir, there's a gentleman without would speak
with you.

El. Lo. Bid him come in.

Enter Welford.

Wel. By your leave, Sir.

⁵⁵ *Sure she has some meeching rascal in her house.]* This word is generally spelt *miching*; it means, *secret, covered, lying hid*. In this sense Chapman, a cotemporary writer, uses it in the *Widow's Tears*, *Dodley's Old Plays*, vol. IV. p. 291. Lysander, to try his wife's fidelity, elopes from her. His friends report that he is dead, and make a mock funeral for him. His wife, to shew excessive sorrow for the loss of her husband, shuts herself up in his monument; to which he comes in disguise, and obtains her love, notwithstanding he had assured her, in the mean time, that he was the man who murdered her husband; on which he exclaims,

——— *Out upon thee, monster!*
Go, tell the governor; let me be brought
To die for that most famous villany,
Not for this miching base transgression
Of truant negligence.

And again, p. 301,

——— *My truant*
Was micht, Sir, into a blind corner of the tomb.

In this sense it occurs in *Philaster* (p. 156) *A rascal miching in a meadow*. A passage in an old Comment on the Ten Commandments, printed at London in 1493, illustrates the meaning of the word: 'Commonly in such feys and markets ther ben many theyves, *'mychers, and cutpurse.'* *Mychers*, that is, *lurking vagabonds*. Shakespeare says of Prince Henry, *Shall the blessed sun of Heaven prove a micher?*
Mr. Warton.

El. Lo.

THE SCORNFUL LADY. 377

El. Lo. You are welcome. What's your will, Sir?

Wel. Have you forgotten me?

El. Lo. I do not much remember you.

Wel. You must, Sir.

I am that gentleman you pleas'd to wrong,
In your disguise; I have enquir'd you out.

El. Lo. I was disguis'd, indeed, Sir, if I wrong'd
you.

Pray, where and when?

Wel. In such a lady's house,
I need not name her.

El. Lo. I do remember you:
You seem'd to be a suitor to that lady?

Wel. If you remember this, do not forget
How scurvily you used me: That was
No place to quarrel in; pray you, think of it:
If you be honest, you dare fight with me,
Without more urging; else I must provoke you.

El. Lo. Sir, I dare fight, but never for a woman;
I will not have her in my cause; she's mortal,
And so is not my anger. If you have brought
A nobler subject for our swords, I am for you;
In this I would be loth to prick my finger.
And where you say, I wrong'd you, 'tis so far
From my profession, that, amongst my fears,
To do wrong is the greatest. Credit me,
We have been both abus'd, not by ourselves
(For that I hold a spleen, no sin of malice,
And may, with man enough, be left forgotten)
But by that wilful, scornful piece of hatred,
That much-forgetful Lady: For whose sake,
If we should leave our reason, and run on
Upon our sense, like rams, the little world
Of good men would laugh at us, and despise us,
Fixing upon our desperate memories
The never-worn-out names of fools and fencers.
Sir, 'tis not fear, but reason, makes me tell you;
In this I had rather help you, Sir, than hurt you.
And,

378 THE SCORNFUL LADY.

And, you shall find it, though you throw yourself
Into as many dangers as she offers,
Though you redeem her lost name every day,
And find her out new honours with your sword,
You shall but be her mirth, as I have been.

Wel. I ask you mercy, Sir; you have ta'en my
edge off:

Yet I would fain be even with this lady.

El. Lo. In which I'll be your helper. We are two,
And they are two; two sisters, rich alike,
Only the elder has the prouder dowry.
In troth, I pity this disgrace in you,
Yet of mine own I am senseless: Do but
Follow my counsel, and I'll pawn my spirit,
We'll over-reach 'em yet. The means is this——

Enter servant.

Ser. Sir, there's a gentlewoman will needs speak
with you:

I cannot keep her out; she's enter'd, Sir.

El. Lo. It is the waiting-woman: Pray be not seen.
Sirrah, hold her in discourse awhile. Hark in your ear;
Go and dispatch it quickly. When I come in,
I'll tell you all the project.

Wel. I care not which I have. *[Exit Wel.]*

El. Lo. Away; 'tis done; she must not see you.
Now, lady Guiniver, what news with you?

Enter Abigail.

Abig. Pray, leave these frumps, Sir, and receive
this letter.

El. Lo. From whom, good Vanity?

Abig. 'Tis from my lady, Sir: Alas, good foul,
She cries and takes on!

El. Lo. Does she so, good foul?
Would she not have a cawdle? Does she send you
With your fine oratory, goody Tully,
To tie me to belief again? Bring out the cat-hounds!
I'll make you take a tree, whore; then with my tiller
Bring

Bring down your gibship⁵⁶; and then have you cas'd,
And hung up in the warren.

Abig. I am no beast, Sir; 'would you knew it.

El. Lo. 'Would I did, for I am yet very doubtful.
What will you say now?

Abig. Nothing, not I.

El. Lo. Art thou a woman, and say nothing?

Abig. Unless you'll hear me with more moderation.
I can speak wise enough.

El. Lo. And loud enough? Will your lady love me?

Abig. It seems so by her letter, and her lamenta-
tions;

But you are such another man.

El. Lo. Not such another as I was, mumps;
Nor will not be. I'll read her fine epistle:
Ha, ha, ha! Is not thy mistress mad?

Abig. For you she will be; 'tis a shame you should
Use a poor gentlewoman so untowardly:
She loves the ground you tread on; and you, hard
heart,

Because she jested with you, mean to kill her.

'Tis a fine conquest, as they say.

El. Lo. Hast thou so much moisture in thy whit-
leather hide yet, that thou canst cry? I would have
sworn thou hadst been touchwood five years since.
Nay, let it rain; thy face chaps for a shower, like a
dry dunghill.

Abig. I'll not endure this ribaldry. Farewell, i' th'
Devil's name! If my lady die, I'll be sworn before
a jury, thou art the cause on't.

El. Lo. Do, maukin, do. Deliver to your lady
from me this: I mean to see her, if I have no other

⁵⁶ *Then with my tiller bring down your gibship, and then have you cast, &c.]* I have already explained the word *tiller* in the 14th note upon Philaster. *Cast*, Mr. Sympson has ingeniously reform'd to *cas'd*; i. e. *flea'd*, and hung up. *Mr. Theobald.*

We know not how old Mr. Sympson was when he made this *ingenious reformation*—which we find in some of the old quarto's, considerably more than an hundred years before that gentleman's *ingenuity* was discovered.

380 THE SCORNFUL LADY.

business ; which before I will want, to come to her, I mean to go seek birds' nests. Yet I may come too : But if I come,

From this door till I see her, will I think
How to rail vilely at her ; how to vex her,
And make her cry so much, that the physician,
If she fall sick upon it, shall want urine
To find the cause by, and she remediless
Die in her heresy. Farewell, old adage !
I hope to see the boys make potguns of thee.

Abig. Thou'rt a vile man. God bless my issue
from thee.

El. Lo. Thou hast but one, and that's in thy left
crupper,
That makes thee hobble so. You must be ground
I' th' breech like a top ; you'll ne'er spin well else.
Farewell, fytchock ! *[Exeunt.]*

Enter Lady alone.

Lady. Is it not strange that every woman's will
Should track out new ways to disturb herself ?
If I should call my reason to account,
It cannot answer why I keep myself
From mine own wish, and stop the man I love
From his ; and every hour repent again,
Yet still go on. I know 'tis like a man
That wants his natural sleep, and, growing dull,
Would gladly give the remnant of his life
For two hours rest ; yet, through his frowardness,
Will rather chuse to watch another man,
Drowsy as he, than take his own repose.
All this I know ; yet a strange peevishness
And anger, not to have the power to do
Things unexpected, carries me away
To mine own ruin !
I'd rather die, sometimes, than not disgrace
In public, him whom people think I love,
And do't with oaths, and am in earnest then.
Oh, what are we ! Men, you must answer this,
That

THE SCORNFUL LADY. 381

That dare obey such things as we command.
How now ? what news ?

Enter Abigail.

Abig. Faith, madam, none worth hearing.

Lady. Is he not come ?

Abig. No, truly.

Lady. Nor has he writ ?

Abig. Neither. I pray God you have not undone yourself.

Lady. Why, but what says he ?

Abig. Faith, he talks strangely.

Lady. How strangely ?

Abig. First, at your letter he laugh'd extremely.

Lady. What, in contempt ?

Abig. He laugh'd monstrous loud, as he would die ; and when you wrote it, I think, you were in no such merry mood, to provoke him that way : And having done, he cried, ' Alas for her,' and violently laugh'd again.

Lady. Did he ?

Abig. Yes ; till I was angry.

Lady. Angry, why ?

Why wert thou angry ? He did do but well ;
I did deserve it ; he had been a fool,
An unfit man for any one to love,
Had he not laugh'd thus at me. You were angry !
That shew'd your folly ; I shall love him more
For that, than all that e'er he did before.
But said he nothing else ?

Abig. Many uncertain things. He said, though you had mock'd him, because you were a woman, he could wish to do you so much favour as to see you : Yet, he said, he knew you rash, and was loth to offend you with the sight of one, whom now he was bound not to leave.

Lady. What one was that ?

Abig. I know not, but truly I do fear there is a making up there ; for I heard the servants, as I past
by

382 THE SCORNFUL LADY.

by some, whisper such a thing : And as I came back thro' the hall, there were two or three clerks writing great conveyances in haste, which, they said, were for their mistress's jointure.

Lady. 'Tis very like, and fit it should be so ;
For he does think, and reasonably think,
That I should keep him, with my idle tricks,
For ever ere he be married.

Abig. At last he 'said, it should go hard but he would see you, for your satisfaction.

Lady. All we, that are call'd women, know as well
As men, it were a far more noble thing
To grace where we are grac'd, and give respect
There, where we are respected : Yet we practise
A wilder course, and never bend our eyes
On men with pleasure, till they find the way
To give us a neglect ; then we, too late,
Perceive the loss of what we might have had,
And dote to death.

Enter Martha.

Mar. Sister, yonder's your servant, with a gentlewoman with him.

Lady. Where ?

Mar. Close at the door.

Lady. Alas, I am undone ! I fear, he is betroth'd.
What kind of woman is she ?

Mar. A most ill-favoured one, with her mask on ;
And how her face should mend the rest, I know not.

Lady. But yet her mind was of a milder stuff
Than mine was.

Enter Elder Loveless, and Welford in woman's apparel.

Now I see him, if my heart
Swell not again (away, thou woman's pride !)
So that I cannot speak a gentle word to him,
Let me not live.

El. Lo. By your leave here.

Lady. How now ! what new trick invites you
hither ?

Have

THE SCORNFUL LADY. 383

Have you a fine device again ?

El. Lo. Faith, this is the finest device I have now.
How dost thou, sweetheart ?

Wel. Why, very well,
So long as I may please you, my dear lover.
I nor can, nor will be ill when you are well,
Well when you are ill.

El. Lo. Oh, thy sweet temper ! What would I have
giv'n,
That lady had been like thee ? See'st thou her ?
That face, my love, join'd with thy humble mind,
Had made a wench indeed !

Wel. Alas, my love,
What God hath done I dare not think to mend !
I use no paint, nor any drugs of art ;
My hands and face will shew it.

Lady. Why, what thing have you brought to shew
us there ?
Do you take money for it ?

El. Lo. A godlike thing,
Not to be bought for money ; 'tis my mistress,
In whom there is no passion, nor no scorn ;
What I will is her law. Pray you, salute her.

Lady. Salute her ? by this good light, I would not
kiss her
For half my wealth.

El. Lo. Why, why, pray you ?
You shall see me do't afore you : Look you.

Lady. Now fie upon thee ! a beast would not have
don't.
I would not kiss thee of a month, to gain a kingdom.

El. Lo. Marry, you shall not be troubled.

Lady. Why, was there ever such a Meg as this ?
Sure thou art mad.

El. Lo. I was mad once, when I lov'd pictures ;
For what are shape and colours else, but pictures ?
In that tawny hide there lies an endless mass
Of virtues, when all your red and white ones want it.

Lady. And this is she you are to marry, is't not ?

El. Lo.

384 THE SCORNFUL LADY.

El. Lo. Yes, indeed, is't.

Lady. God give you joy !

El. Lo. Amen.

Wel. I thank you, as unknown, for your good wish.
The like to you whenever you shall wed.

El. Lo. Oh, gentle spirit !

Lady. You thank me ? I pray,
Keep your breath nearer you ; I do not like it.

Wel. I would not willingly offend at all ;
Much less a lady of your worthy parts.

El. Lo. Sweet, sweet !

Lady. I do not think this woman can by nature
Be thus, thus ugly : Sure, she's some common strum-
pet,
Deform'd with exercise of sin.

Wel. Oh, Sir,
Believe not this ; for Heav'n so comfort me,
As I am free from foul pollution
With any man ; my honour ta'en away,
I am no woman.

El. Lo. Arise, my dearest soul ;
I do not credit it. Alas, I fear
Her tender heart will break with this reproach !
Fie, that you know no more civility
To a weak virgin. 'Tis no matter, sweet ;
Let her say what she will, thou art not worse
To me, and therefore not at all ; be careless.

Wel. For all things else I would ; but for mine
honour,
Methinks——

El. Lo. Alas, thine honour is not stain'd.
Is this the business that you sent for me
About ?

Mar. Faith, sister, you are much to blame,
To use a woman, whatsoe'er she be,
Thus. I'll salute her : You are welcome hither.

Wel. I humbly thank you.

El. Lo. Mild yet as the dove,
For all these injuries. Come, shall we go ?

I love

I love thee not so ill to keep thee here,
A jesting stock. Adieu. To the world's end !

Lady. Why, whither now ?

El. Lo. Nay, you shall never know,
Because you shall not find me.

Lady. I pray, let me speak with you.

El. Lo. 'Tis very well. Come.

Lady. I pray you, let me speak with you.

El. Lo. Yes, for another mock.

Lady. By Heav'n, I have no mocks. Good Sir,
a word.

El. Lo. Tho' you deserve not so much at my hands,
yet, if you be in such earnest, I'll speak a word with
you ; but, I beseech you, be brief ; for, in good faith,
there's a parson and a licence stay for us i' th' church
all this while ; and, you know, 'tis night.

Lady. Sir, give me hearing patiently, and whatso'er
I've heretofore spoke jestingly, forget :
For, as I hope for mercy any where,
What I shall utter now is from my heart,
And as I mean.

El. Lo. Well, well, what do you mean ?

Lady. Was not I once your mistress, and you my
servant ?

El. Lo. Oh, 'tis about the old matter.

Lady. Nay, good Sir, stay me out : I would but
hear you excuse yourself, why you should take this
woman, and leave me.

El. Lo. Prithee, why not ? deserves she not as much
as you ?

Lady. I think not, if you will look with an in-
differency upon us both.

El. Lo. Upon your faces, 'tis true : But if judi-
cially we shall cast our eyes upon your minds, you are
a thousand women off of her in worth⁵⁷. She cannot
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larity of the words *off* and *of*, the copyists, we apprehend, have lost
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384 THE SCORNFUL LADY.

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peevishness and his affection; nor cross what he says, though it be canonical. She's a good plain wench, that will do as I will have her, and bring me lusty boys, to throw the sledge, and lift at pigs of lead. And, for a wife, she's far beyond you: What can you do in a household to provide for your issue, but lie in bed and get 'em? Your business is to dress you, and at idle hours to eat; when she can do a thousand profitable things: She can do pretty well in the pastry, and knows how pullen should be cramm'd; she cuts cambrick at a thread, weaves bone-lace, and quilts balls admirably. And what are you good for?

Lady. Admit it true, that she were far beyond me in all respects, does that give you a licence to forswear yourself?

El. Lo. Forswear myself, how?

Lady. Perhaps you have forgot the innumerable oaths you have utter'd, in disclaiming all for wives but me: I'll not remember you. God give you joy!

El. Lo. Nay, but conceive me; the intent of oaths is ever understood. Admit, I should protest to such a friend, to see him at his lodgings to-morrow; divines would never hold me perjur'd, if I were struck blind, or he hid where my diligent search could not find him; so there were no cross act of mine own in't. Can it be imagin'd I mean to force you to marriage, and to have you whether you will or no?

Lady. Alas, you need not: I make already tender of myself, and then you are forsworn.

El. Lo. Some sin, I see, indeed, must necessarily fall upon me; as whosoever deals with women shall never utterly avoid it. Yet I would choose the least ill; which is to forsake you, that have done me all the abuses of a malignant woman, contemn'd my service, and would have held me prating about marriage, till I'd been past getting of children,
Rather than her that hath forsook her family,
And put her tender body in my hand.
Upon my word——

Lady.

THE SCORNFUL LADY. 387

Lady. Which of us swore you first to ?

El. Lo. Why, to you.

Lady. Which oath is to be kept then ?

El. Lo. I prithee do not urge my sins unto me,
Without I could amend 'em.

Lady. Why, you may, by wedding me.

El. Lo. How will that satisfy my word to her ?

Lady. It is not to be kept,
And needs no satisfaction : It is an error,
Fit for repentance only.

El. Lo. Shall I live
To wrong that tender-hearted virgin so ?
It may not be !

Lady. Why may it not be ?

El. Lo. I swear I had rather marry thee than her ;
But yet mine honesty——

Lady. What honesty ?
'Tis more preserv'd this way. Come, by this light,
Servant, thou shalt ! I'll kiss thee on't.

El. Lo. This kiss,
Indeed, is sweet : Pray God, no sin lie under it !

Lady. There is no sin at all ; try but another.

Wel. Oh, my heart !

Mar. Help, sister ; this lady swoons !

El. Lo. How do you ?

Wel. Why, very well, if you be so.

El. Lo. Since a quiet mind lives not in any woman,
I shall do a most ungodly thing. Hear me one word
more ; which, by all my hopes, I will not alter.
I did make an oath, when you delay'd me so, that
this very night I would be married : Now if you will
go without delay, suddenly, as late as it is,
With your own minister, to your own chapel,
I'll wed you, and to-bed.

Lady. A match, dear servant.

El. Lo. For if you should forsake me now, I care
not :

She would not though, for all her injuries ;
Such is her spirit. If I be not ashamed
To kiss her now I part, may I not live !

388 THE SCORNFUL LADY.

Wel. I see you go, as flily as you think
To steal away; yet I will pray for you:
All blessings of the world light on you two,
That you may live to be an aged pair!
All curses on me, if I do not speak
What I do wish, indeed!

El. Lo. If I can speak
To purpose to her, I'm a villain.

Lady. Servant, away!

Mar. Sister, will you marry that inconstant man?
Think you, he will not cast you off tomorrow?
To wrong a lady thus! Look'd she like dirt,
'Twas basely done. May you ne'er prosper with him!

Wel. Now God forbid!
Alas, I was unworthy; so I told him.

Mar. That was your modesty: Too good for him!
I would not see your wedding, for a world.

Lady. Choose, choose! Come, Younglove.

[*Exeunt Lady, El. Love. and Abig.*]

Mar. Dry up your eyes, forsooth; you shall not
think

We are all uncivil, all such beasts as these.
Would I knew how to give you a revenge!

Wel. So would not I: No, let me suffer truly;
That I desire.

Mar. Pray walk in with me;
'Tis very late, and you shall stay all night:
Your bed shall be no worse than mine. I wish
I could but do you right.

Wel. My humble thanks:
God grant I may but live to quit your love! [*Exeunt.*]

Enter Young Loveless and Savil.

Yo. Lo. Did your master send for me, Savil?

Sav. Yes, he did send for your worship, Sir.

Yo. Lo. Do you know the business?

Sav. Alas, Sir, I know nothing;
Nor am employ'd beyond my hours of eating.
My dancing days are done, Sir.

Yo. Lo. What art thou now, then?

Sav.

THE SCORNFUL LADY. 389

Sav. If you consider me in little, I am, with your worship's reverence, Sir, a rascal: One, that upon the next anger of your brother, must raise a scone by the highway, and sell switches. My wife is learning now, Sir, to weave inkle.

Yo. Lo. What dost thou mean to do with thy children, Savil?

Sav. My eldest boy is half a rogue already: He was born bursten; and, your worship knows, That is a pretty step to mens' compassions. My youngest boy I purpose, Sir, to bind For ten years to a gaoler, to draw under him, That he may shew us mercy in his function.

Yo. Lo. Your family is quarter'd with discretion. You are resolved to cant, then? Where, Savil, Shall your scene lie?

Sav. Beggars must be no choosers: In every place, I take it, but the stocks.

Yo. Lo. This is your drinking and your whoring, Savil:

I told you of it; but your heart was harden'd.

Sav. 'Tis true, you were the first that told me of it, indeed.

I do remember yet in tears, you told me, You would have whores; and in that passion, Sir, You broke out thus: Thou miserable man, Repent, and brew three strikes more in a hog'shead: 'Tis noon ere we be drunk now, and the time Can tarry for no man.

Yo. Lo. You're grown a bitter gentleman. I see, Misery can clear your head better than mustard. I'll be a suitor for your keys again, Sir.

Sav. Will you but be so gracious to me, Sir? I shall be bound——

Yo. Lo. You shall, Sir, To your bunch again; or I'll miss foully.

Enter Morecraft.

Mor. Save you, gentleman, save you!

B b 3

Yo. Lo.

390 THE SCORNFUL LADY.

Yo. Lo. Now, polecat, what young rabbit's nest have you to draw?

Mor. Come, prithee be familiar, knight.

Yo. Lo. Away, fox! I'll send for terriers for you.

Mor. Thou art wide yet: I'll keep thee company.

Yo. Io. I am about some business, Indentures!

If you follow me, I'll beat you; take heed!

As I live I'll cancel your coxcomb.

Mor. Thou art cozen'd now; I am no usurer.
What poor fellow's this?

Sav. I am poor indeed, Sir.

Mor. Give him money, knight.

Yo. Lo. Do you begin the offering.

Mor. There, poor fellow; here's an angel for thee.

Yo. Lo. Art thou in earnest, Morecraft?

Mor. Yes, faith, knight. I'll follow thy example:

Thou hadst land and thousands⁵⁸, which thou spent'st,
And flung'st away, and yet it flows in double.

I purchas'd, wrung, and wiredraw'd, for my wealth,
Lost, and was cozen'd: For which I make a vow,
To try all ways above ground, but I'll find
A constant means to riches without curses.

Yo. Lo. I am glad of your conversion, master Morecraft:

You're in a fair course; pray pursue it still.

Mor. Come, we are all gallants now; I'll keep thee company. Here, honest fellow, for this gentleman's sake, there's two angels more for thee.

Sav. God quit you, Sir, and keep you long in this mind!

Yo. Lo. Wilt thou persevere?

Mor. 'Till I have a penny.

I have brave cloaths a-making, and two horses:

Canst thou not help me to a match, knight?

I'll lay a thousand pound upon my Crop-ear.

⁵⁸ *Thou hadst land and thousands, thou spent'st, &c.*] We have added the word *which* here, it being requisite to both sense and verse.

THE SCORNFUL LADY. 391

Yo. Lo. 'Foot, this is stranger than an Africk monster!

There will be no more talk of the Cleve wars
While this lasts. Come, I'll put thee into blood.

Sav. 'Would all his damn'd tribe were as tender-hearted! I beseech you let this gentleman join with you in the recovery of my keys; I like his good beginning, Sir; the whilst, I'll pray for both your worships.

Yo. Lo. He shall, Sir.

Mor. Shall we go, noble knight? I would fain be acquainted.

Yo. Lo. I'll be your servant, Sir. [Exeunt.

Enter Elder Loveless and Lady.

El. Lo. 'Faith, my sweet Lady, I have caught you now,
Maugre your subtilties, and fine devices.
Be coy again now.

Lady. Prithee, sweetheart, tell true.

El. Lo. By this light,
By all the pleasures I have had this night,
By your lost maidenhead, you are cozen'd merely;
I have cast beyond your wit: That gentlewoman
Is your retainer Welford⁵⁹.

Lady. It cannot be so.

El. Lo. Your sister has found it so, or I mistake.
Mark how she blushes when you see her next.
Ha, ha, ha! I shall not travel now. Ha, ha, ha!

Lady. Prithee, sweetheart,
Be quiet; thou hast angered me at heart.

El. Lo. I'll please you soon again.

Lady. Welford?

El. Lo. Ay, Welford. He's a young handsome

⁵⁹ *That gentleman is your retainer Welford*] I think the Poets certainly wrote *gentlewoman*, i. e. that seeming gentlewoman; for Welford was now in woman's habit. And so, again, in the subsequent page, *Now you may see the gentlewoman: Stand close.*

Mr. Theobald.

392 THE SCORNFUL LADY.

fellow ; well-bred, and landed : Your sister can instruct you in his good parts, better than I, by this time.

Lady. Ud's foot, am I fetch'd over thus ?

El. Lo. Yes, i'faith ;

And over shall be fetch'd again, never fear it.

Lady. I must be patient, though it torture me !
You have got the fun, Sir.

El. Lo. And the moon too ; in which I'll be the man.

Lady. But had I known this, had I but surmis'd it,
You should have hunted three trains more, before
You had come to th' course ;
You should have hank'd o'th' bridle, Sir, i'faith.

El. Lo. I knew it, and min'd with you, and so
blew you up.

Now you may see the gentlewoman : Stand close.

Enter Welford and Martha.

Mar. For God's sake, Sir, be private in this business ;
You have undone me else. Oh, God, what have I done ?

Wel. No harm, I warrant thee.

Mar. How shall I look upon my friends again ?
With what face ?

Wel. Why e'en with that ; 'tis a good one, thou
canst not find a better. Look upon all the faces
thou shalt see there, and you shall find 'em smooth
still, fair still, sweet still, and, to your thinking,
honest ; those have done as much as you have yet, or
dare do, mistrefs ; and yet they keep no stir.

Mar. Good Sir, go in, and put your woman's
cloaths on :

If you be seen thus, I am lost for ever.

Wel. I'll watch you for that, mistrefs : I am no fool.
Here will I tarry till the house be up,
And witness with me.

Mar. Good dear friend, go in.

Wel. To-bed again, if you please ; else I am fix'd
here till there be notice taken what I am, and what
I have

THE SCORNFUL LADY. 393

I have done. If you could juggle me into my womanhood again, and so cog me out of your company, all this would be forsworn, and I again an asinego, as your sister left me. No; I'll have it known and publish'd: Then, if you'll be a whore, forsake me, and be ashamed; and, when you can hold out no longer, marry some cast Cleve captain, and sell bottle-ale.

Mar. I dare not stay, Sir; use me modestly; I am your wife.

Wel. Go in; I'll make up all.

El. Lo. I'll be a witness of your naked truth, Sir. This is the gentlewoman; prithee look upon him: This is he that made me break my faith, sweet: But thank your sister, she hath solder'd it.

Lady. What a dull ass was I, I could not see This wencher from a wench! Twenty to one, If I had been but tender, like my sister, He had serv'd me such a slippery trick too.

Wel. Twenty to one I had.

El. Lo. I would have watch'd you, Sir, by your good patience,
For ferreting in my ground.

Lady. You have been with my sister?

Wel. Yes; to bring——

El. Lo. An heir into the world, he means.

Lady. There is no chafing now.

Wel. I have had my part on't:
I have been chaff'd this three hours, that's the least;
I am reasonable cool now.

Lady. Cannot you fare well, but you must cry
roastmeat?

Wel. He that fares well, and will not bless the
founders,
Is either surfeited, or ill taught, Lady.
For mine own part, I have found so sweet a diet,
I can commend it, though I cannot spare it.

El. Lo. How like you this dish, Welford? I made
a supper on't,
And fed so heartily I could not sleep.

Lady.

394 THE SCORNFUL LADY.

Lady. By this light, had I but scented out your train, you had slept with a bare pillow in your arms; and kiss'd that, or else the bed-post, for any wife you had got this twelvemonth yet. I would have vex'd you more than a tir'd post-horse; and been longer bearing, than ever after-game at Irish was. Lord, that I were unmarried again!

El. Lo. Lady, I would not undertake you, were you again a haggard⁶⁰, for the best cast of ladies i' th' kingdom: You were ever tickle-footed, and would not trufs round.

Wel. Is she fast?

El. Lo. She was all night lock'd here, boy.

Wel. Then you may lure her, without fear of losing⁶¹: Take off her creyance. You have a delicate gentlewoman to your sister: Lord, what a pretty fury she was in, when she perceiv'd I was a man! But, I thank God, I satisfied her scruple, without the parson o'th' town.

El. Lo. What did ye?

Wel. Madam, can you tell what we did?

El. Lo. She has a shrewd guess at it; I see it by her.

Lady. Well, you may mock us: But, my large gentlewoman,
My Mary Ambrée⁶², had I but seen into you,
You

⁶⁰ *Haggard.*] This is a term relative to a diversion, in our Authors' time much attended to, but now lost; *viz.* hawking. A *haggard* hawk is a *wild hawk*, a hawk unreclaimed, or irreclaimable. *R.*

⁶¹ *Then you may lure her without fear of losing: Take off her cranes.*] A *lure*, in falconry, is a machine composed of feathers and leather; which by being cast up into the air, seems in its motion to look like a fowl: Upon this, a young hawk is train'd up to be fed, has a live dove given her; and therefore forsakes not the *lure*. The *creyance* is a fine small long line of strong, and even twined pack-thread, which is fastened to the hawk's leash before she is *reclaim'd*, or fully tamed. *Mr. Theobald.*

⁶² *My Mary Ambrée.*] This was a virago who went a-volunteering in mens' cloaths in the reign of queen Elizabeth. She was celebrated in a ballad which Dr. Percy has printed at large in his *Reliques of Antient Poetry*, vol. II. The time when she performed this exploit

THE SCORNFUL LADY. 395

You should have had another bedfellow,
Fitter a great deal for your itch.

Wel. I thank you, lady; methought it was well.
You are so curious!

*Enter Young Loveless, his lady, Morecraft, Savil, and
two servingmen.*

El. Lo. Get on your doublet; here comes my brother.

Yo. Lo. Good-morrow, brother; and all good to your lady!

Mor. God save you, and good-morrow to you all!

El. Lo. Good-morrow. Here's a poor brother of yours.

Lady. Fie, how this shames me.

Mor. Prithee, good fellow, help me to a cup of beer.

Ser. I will, Sir.

Yo. Lo. Brother, what make you here? Will this lady do?

Will she? Is she not nettled still?

El. Lo. No, I have cur'd her.

Mr. Welford, pray know this gentleman; he's my brother.

Wel. Sir, I shall long to love him.

Yo. Lo. I shall not be your debtor, Sir. But how is't with you?

El. Lo. As well as may be, man: I am married. Your new acquaintance hath her sister; and all's well.

Yo. Lo. I am glad on't. Now, my pretty lady sister, How do you find my brother?

Lady. Almost as wild as you are.

plot appears to have been about the year 1584; when the Spaniards, under the command of Alexander Farnese, prince of Parma, began to gain great advantages in Flanders and Brabant, by recovering many strong-holds and cities from the Hollanders, as Ghent, Antwerp, Mechlin, &c. See Stow's Annals, 711. Ben Jonson often mentions her, and calls any remarkable virago by her name. See his *Epicæne*, act iv. scene ii. his *Tale of a Tub*, act i. scene iv. and his masque entitled the Fortunate Isles.

R.

Yo. Lo.

396 THE SCORNFUL LADY.

Yo. Lo. He'll make the better husband : You have tried him ?

Lady. Against my will, Sir.

Yo. Lo. He'll make your will amends soon, do not doubt it.

But, Sir, I must intreat you to be better known
To this converted Jew here.

Ser. Here's beer for you, Sir.

Mor. And here's for you an angel.

Pray buy no land ; 'twill never prosper, Sir.

El. Lo. How's this ?

Yo. Lo. Bless you, and then I'll tell. He's turn'd gallant.

El. Lo. Gallant ?

Yo. Lo. Ay, gallant, and is now call'd Cutting Morecraft :

The reason I'll inform you at more leisure.

Wel. Oh, good Sir, let me know him presently.

Yo. Lo. You shall hug one another.

Mor. Sir, I must keep you company.

El. Lo. And reason.

Yo. Lo. Cutting Morecraft, faces about ⁶³ ; I must present another.

Mor. As many as you will, Sir ; I am for 'em.

Wel. Sir, I shall do you service.

Mor. I shall look for't, in good faith, Sir.

El. Lo. Prithee, good sweetheart, kiss him.

Lady. Who ? that fellow ?

Sav. Sir, will it please you to remember me ?

My keys, good Sir !

Yo. Lo. I'll do it presently.

El. Lo. Come, thou shalt kiss him for our sport
fake.

⁶³ *Cutting Morecraft faces about.*] These words are of the same import with our modern phrase, which, by dropping of a letter, is corrupted to *face about*. We meet with the same expression again in the Knight of the Burning Pestle, where Ralph is exercising his men ; *Double your files as you were* ; faces about ; act v. So in Ben Jonson's Every Man in his Humour, Wellbred says, *Good captain, faces about—to some other discourse* ; act iii. scene i.

R.

Lady.

THE SCORNFUL LADY. 397

Lady. Let him come on then ; and, do you hear, do not instruct me in these tricks, for you may repent it.

El. Lo. That at my peril. Lusty Mr. Morecraft, Here is a lady would salute you.

Mor. She shall not lose her longing, Sir. What is she ?

El. Lo. My wife, Sir.

Mor. She must be, then, my mistress.

Lady. Must I, Sir ?

El. Lo. Oh, yes, you must.

Mor. And you must take this ring, a poor pawn Of some fifty pound.

El. Lo. Take it, by any means ; 'tis lawful prize.

Lady. Sir, I shall call you servant.

Mor. I shall be proud on't. What fellow's that ?

Yo. Lo. My lady's coachman.

Mor. There's something, my friend, for you to buy whips ;

And for you, Sir ; and you, Sir.

El. Lo. Under a miracle, this is the strangest I ever heard of.

Mor. What, shall we play, or drink ? What shall we do ?

Who will hunt with me for a hundred pounds ?

Wel. Stranger and stranger !

Sir, you shall find sport after a day or two.

Yo. Lo. Sir, I have a suit unto you, Concerning your old servant Savil.

El. Lo. Oh, for his keys, I know it.

Sav. Now, Sir, strike in.

Mor. Sir, I must have you grant me.

El. Lo. 'Tis done, Sir. Take your keys again : But hark you, Savil ; leave off the motions Of the flesh, and be honest, or else you shall graze again :

I'll try you once more.

Sav. If ever I be taken drunk, or whoring, Take off the biggest key i'th' bunch, and open

My

398 THE SCORNFUL LADY.

My head with it, Sir. I humbly thank your worships.

El. Lo. Nay, then, I see we must keep holiday.

Enter Roger and Abigail.

Here's the last couple in hell.

Rog. Joy be among you all!

Lady. Why, how now, Sir, what's the meaning of this emblem?

Rog. Marriage, an't like your worship.

Lady. Are you married?

Rog. As well as the next priest could do it, madam.

El. Lo. I think the sign's in Gemini, here's such coupling.

Wel. Sir Roger, what will you take to lie from your sweetheart to-night?

Rog. Not the best benefice in your worship's gift, Sir!

Wel. A whorson, how he swells!

Yo. Lo. How many times to-night, Sir Roger?

Rog. Sir, you grow scurrilous.

What I shall do, I shall do: I shall not need your help.

Yo. Lo. For horse-flesh, Roger.

El. Lo. Come, prithee be not angry; 'tis a day Given wholly to our mirth.

Lady. It shall be so, Sir. Sir Roger and his bride, We shall intreat to be at our charge.

El. Lo. Welford, get you to the church: By this light,

You shall not lie with her again, till y' are married.

Wel. I am gone.

Mor. To every bride I dedicate, this day,
Six healths a piece; and, it shall go hard,
But every one a jewel. Come, be mad, boys!

El. Lo. Thou'rt in a good beginning. Come, who leads?

Sir Roger, you shall have the van, and lead the way.
'Would every dogged wench had such a day!

[*Exeunt omnes.*]

‘ THE sudden conversion of Morecraft, says Mr. Theobald, from a griping usurer to a downright gallant, is quite extravagant and out of the rules and practice of the stage: Especially, as there is no shadow of reason for it; unless he may be said to look upon the loss he had sustained from Young Loveless to be a scourge and judgment upon him for his former rapaciousness.’

If Mr. Theobald, by ‘ out of the rules and practice of the stage’ means, that there is no similar circumstance to be met with, his objection is trifling, his assertion erroneous. *Trifling*, because, on such principle, the most pleasing ingredient in dramatic entertainment, Originality, must be precluded the theatre; *erroneous*, because Terence exhibits the same change in the character of Demea, in his *Adelphi*. Mr. Theobald asserts too, ‘ that there is no shadow of *reason* for the alteration, unless it be the loss he had sustained by Young Loveless.’ Morecraft himself assigns a much better; one, indeed, which may go far in persuading us, that his disposition is *not altered*, and that he only affects profusion, in hope of gaining more by that than by overreaching and scraping: ‘ Thou, says he to Young Loveless, wast rich; thou flung’st away; and yet wealth flows in double: I wrung and wire-draw’d; lost, and was cozen’d: On which account, I mean to follow thy example.’ Goodnature, by laying much stress on this passage, may think the character consistent: But, after all that can be urged for or against, the plain question being asked, ‘ Whether such an alteration, either in sentiment or policy, is consonant to Nature, the grand arbitress of propriety?’ the reply must certainly be in the negative. And it is pity a Comedy, so replete with wit, character, and conduct, should have so striking a blemish.

Donatus remarks, that Terence ‘ shews, how awkwardly a man of an opposite disposition endeavours to be complaisant; and, that a miser, meaning to be generous, runs into profusion.’ We think our Authors do not fall short of Terence in this picture; since what Mr. Colman says of Demea may, with equal propriety, be applied to Morecraft; ‘ That his complaisance, gaiety, and liberality, are assumed; and that his awkwardness, in affecting those qualities, is truly comic.’

